

# THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

## INSIDE

Southern Christian Leadership Conference meets in Maryland

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## New council in S. Africa is fatal blow to apartheid

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Multiparty talks in South Africa took a major stride forward September 7 as 19 of the 23 political parties participating in the negotiating sessions approved the creation of a Transitional Executive Council (TEC) to oversee governance of the country leading up to the nation's first-ever democratic, nonracial election set for April 27, 1994.

"It is an historic moment for those who have struggled against apartheid," stated African National Congress (ANC) secretary-general Cyril Ramaphosa. "The adoption of the draft TEC bill is one of the final steps in bringing down the apartheid edifice."

The TEC is to be composed of about two dozen members, including one representative from every major political party, and will have broad authority to override the South African government on virtually anything that could influence the climate for the elections.

Among the powers delegated to the new council and its seven subcouncils are: organizing a new security force comprising members of the current police and army as well as former antiapartheid fighters, investigating and suspending police officers accused of misdeeds, monitoring expenditures of state money, supervising state television and radio, and the right to have access to most

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University of Cape Town students march to the home of South African president de Klerk September 2 to demand an end to violence.

## Labor Day rallies back striking miners

BY MARY ZINS

EVANSVILLE, Indiana — Union members and other working people in many cities and towns across the country demonstrated support for striking coal miners at marches and rallies to commemorate Labor Day, September 6. Seventeen thousand members of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) in seven states are on strike — many since May. They're demanding a decent contract from the Bituminous Coal Operators Association (BCOA).

The Labor Day march in this southern Indiana city drew more than 7,000 unionists. For an hour and a half, the streets were filled with electrical workers, auto workers, plumbers, garment workers, and others. The workers marched behind signs proclaiming, "We support the UMWA."

Members of the UMWA, their families,

and supporters came from western Kentucky and Illinois, in addition to Indiana. The car caravan from Illinois brought so many workers that it stretched for several miles.

After the parade, the miners and other unionists joined together in a rally at the Vanderburgh County Fairgrounds. UMWA president Richard Trumka, secretary-treasurer Jerry Jones, Indiana state AFL-CIO president Chuck Decker, and Congressman Frank McCloskey addressed the gathering.

### Coal bosses ask for strikebreakers

In the days leading up to the rally, Peabody Coal Co. sent out a letter to strikers asking them to return to work. In addition Peabody Holding Co.'s subsidiaries, Peabody Coal and Eastern Associated Coal Corp., ran full-page ads in newspapers throughout the coalfields. "We invite you

back to work" read the ads, with a phone number that miners could call if they were interested.

Ty Decker, president of UMWA Local 2412 at Peabody's Marissa mine in Illinois, reported that the bosses had recently brought 25 bunk beds and mattresses into the bathhouses at the Marissa and nearby Baldwin mines. "If the coal companies are so interested in negotiating like they say they are," he said, "then why are they bringing beds into the washhouses?" Decker said that he didn't know of any miners who had taken up Peabody's offer.

Daniel Peterson, a member of UMWA Local 1793 at Peabody's Camp 1 mine in Union County, Kentucky, explained why he came to Evansville. "The coal companies want to starve us out," he said. "We work for a living and we think the coal companies should pay for health insurance and take care of their workers. This solidarity is what we need."

Larry Prinn, a member of United Auto Workers (UAW) from Illinois who works at Caterpillar Corp., also showed up at the Labor Day action. Caterpillar workers waged a five-month strike in 1992 and are still locked in a struggle to gain a decent contract. "We are here to show the UMWA support and to find out about the real situation in the coalfields," Prinn said.

### Coal bosses 'refuse to address issues'

Two thousand miners and supporters rallied at Camp Muffy near Morgantown, West Virginia, on September 4. "I wish I could tell you we were closing in on an agreement," UMWA president Richard Trumka told the crowd, "but I'd be lying. For six months the BCOA has refused to address the fundamental issues of the strike."

Coal miners at the Evansville and West

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Miners win support from thousands of unionists at Evansville, Indiana, labor march.

## Palestinians discuss limited withdrawal of Israeli troops

BY PAT SMITH

Palestinians rallied in the Israeli-occupied West Bank September 5 in support of the decision of Al Fatah, the dominant group inside the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), to approve an agreement for Palestinian self-rule over the Gaza Strip and the West Bank city of Jericho. Particularly important to the Palestinian people are the provisions of the accord that call for the withdrawal of Israeli troops from the occupied territories.

"I was happy to hear about the agreement because it will rid us of the occupation," said Mohammed Abu Faris, from the Bureij refugee camp. The agreement, which was approved by the Israeli cabinet August 31, is being discussed at the 11th round of Mideast peace talks in Washington, D.C.

Some 1,500 people gathered in Beit Sahour, near Bethlehem, and several hundred Palestinians packed a school in Qalandya, north of Jerusalem, at rallies in favor of the accord. "It's a big decision and the first step toward the implementation of Palestinian rights," Palestinian leader Faisal al-Husseini told the Beit Sahour gathering. "Now the real political struggle begins."

Ali Abu Sido, a shopkeeper in Gaza whose 15-year-old son was killed by Israeli soldiers five years ago, said he was heartened by the agreement. "There has been

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## U.S. rulers threaten war against Iraq, N. Korea

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

After conducting a major six-month review, the Pentagon released its report on plans for reorganizing the U.S. military with the aim of being able to wage two "regional" wars simultaneously.

Defense Secretary Les Aspin, Joint Chiefs of Staff chairman Gen. Colin Powell, and Clinton administration figures used the report to step up threats against North Korea and Iraq. These are "places where the United States armed force might have to go and fight and win," Powell stated.

The projections, unveiled at a news conference September 1 by Aspin and Powell, add \$13 billion to the \$1.2 trillion the U.S. rulers are already planning to spend over the next five years to further enhance their war-making capabilities.

The plan calls for reducing the size of the armed forces from 1.7 million to 1.4 million troops by 1999, while essentially continuing the military projections made by former U.S. president George Bush.

According to the *Wall Street Journal*, the Pentagon "envisions a U.S. military that uses sea and air power to project force. It thus favors the acquisition of new aircraft and the preservation of a robust Navy and Marines."

By the end of the decade the Navy would have 12 carriers, only 1 less than today, and 346 ships, down from 443 today. The Ma-

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# IN BRIEF

## UN steps up raids in Somalia

United Nations envoy Jonathan Howe has vowed to arrest Gen. Mohammed Farah Aidid, saying he wants to capture him alive and put him on trial. UN officials blame the Somali military commander for the death of 24 Pakistani soldiers. U.S. Rangers swooped down from helicopters September 7 and arrested 17 Somalis as part of their latest search for Aidid. Two rangers and two Somalis were wounded when shooting broke out during the raid.

Meanwhile, U.S. soldiers knocked on the door of a U.S.-based aid organization September 2 before carrying out a predawn raid. The operation contrasted sharply with a raid early in the week by elite U.S. Army Rangers who stormed the UN Development Program complex, tied up nine UN employees and held them at gunpoint. Eight were taken away and detained until their identification was established.

## Italian workers fight job cuts

Hundreds of chemical workers in Crotone, in southern Italy, barricaded themselves in the factory where they work September 7 to protest the impending shutdown of the plant. Workers poured toxic phosphorous on roads and set them afire to keep the police from storming the plant. For many Italians, unemployment levels this winter are expected to be higher than they have seen in their lifetimes. In Calabria, where Crotone is the main industrial site, unemployment has reached 40 percent. The government has been forced to propose a public works program while at the same time pushing austerity measures to cut roughly \$17 billion from the government deficit, which is expected to exceed the limits imposed by the European Community.

## Germans close immigrant hostels

Since Germany's new immigration law took effect July 1, hostels for housing immigrants seeking asylum are closing, and plans to build new ones are being canceled. Under this reactionary law, no one who enters Germany by land is eligible for asylum. Officials estimate that half of the immigrants rejected remain in the country even without the benefit of legal status. "The new asylum law is clearly working well," Interior Minister Günther Beckstein said.



Somalis rally in August against U.N. troops occupying their country.

## Ukraine may sell fleet to Russia

President Leonid Kravchuk agreed to sell Ukraine's share of the disputed 350-ship Black Sea fleet to the Russian government and to dismantle nuclear missiles remaining on Ukrainian territory. Washington has offered \$175 million in aid toward disarming the country. Under the agreement Ukraine will keep the uranium from the 1,800 warheads as fuel for nuclear power plants. Moscow's payment for the fleet will be deducted from Ukraine's \$600 million debt. The accords, which must be approved by both the Russian and Ukrainian parliaments, face serious opposition in the Ukrainian legislature.

## Parliament voids Yeltsin's decree

The Russian parliament voted September 3 to suspend President Boris Yeltsin's removal of his vice-president and another top official. Yeltsin issued a decree September 1 suspending political rival Vice-President Aleksandr Rutskoi and First Deputy Prime Minister Vladimir Shumeiko from their jobs, pending an investigation into allegations of illegal financial dealings. No formal criminal charges have

been filed against Rutskoi and Shumeiko because the government reportedly lacks sufficient evidence.

The standoff over the politicians' suspensions is another example of the mounting tensions arising from the social and economic crisis.

## Russia pulls out of Lithuania

The Russian government completed the pullout of its troops from Lithuania August 31. Moscow had stopped the withdrawal of the remainder of the 30,000 soldiers once stationed there more than a week earlier, protesting Lithuanian demands for reparations for 50 years of occupation. The Russian rulers said they refused to be held responsible, financially or historically, for acts of the former Soviet Union.

## No chemical arms on Chinese ship

China denounced Washington's "self-styled world cop" behavior and demanded compensation for the disruption of its ocean commerce by U.S. warships and aircraft. Since July 23 the U.S. Navy shadowed and photographed a Chinese cargo ship, claiming it was exporting raw materials to Iran that are used to produce mustard and nerve gases. Beijing said that Washington compelled the ship to stay adrift on the high seas for more than 20 days by pressuring governments in the Persian Gulf area to keep the ship out of their ports, putting the crew and the vessel at risk.

A 10-day inspection of the ship by U.S., Chinese, and Saudi officials certified September 4 that the ship was not carrying any chemical weapons. U.S. officials have refused to apologize for the harassment, but are discussing whether they are obligated to pay compensation for the cost of diverting the ship to Saudi Arabia and flying inspection teams to the Gulf port.

## No aid for immigrant workers

According to Frank Sherry, executive di-

rector of the National Immigration Forum, fewer than 1 percent of the applicants granted permanent residency under the U.S. government's "amnesty" program of 1987-88 had received general assistance, Social Security, Supplemental Security Income, workers' compensation, or unemployment insurance payments when they applied. Fewer than half of 1 percent obtained food stamps or Aid to Families with Dependent Children.

Of these immigrants, men worked an average of two hours a day longer than men in the general population and women worked five hours a day more. Thirteen percent of the applicants were not paid time and a half for the overtime they worked. Of this group, 52 percent were men, and 74 percent were women.

## Long-term interest rates fall

Long-term interest rates plunged to their lowest level in a quarter century, after reports that leading indicators and employment figures for the United States are weak and inflation is a low 2.8 percent. The index of leading indicators is intended to predict the course of the economy six to nine months from now. The news about the economy prompted investors seeking more secure holdings to buy U.S. government bonds, forcing interest rates down to below 6 percent for the first time since the late 1960s.

The bond market rally was set off by a reported 39,000 drop in the number of payroll jobs in August, the first dip in a year. Analysts had expected an increase of 145,000.

## President of Guatemala demands resignation of legislature

Guatemalan president Ramiro de León Carpio has demanded that the entire Congress resign. He said he will lead peaceful street demonstrations to put pressure on the legislators to quit. So far 75 of the 116 representatives have agreed to step down. De León replaced Jorge Serrano Elías in June following huge protests against Serrano, who dissolved the legislature and Supreme Court and suspended the constitution May 25 with the backing of the military.

## Gay woman denied custody

A Richmond, Virginia, circuit court upheld a lower court's decision to take a two-year-old boy away from his mother because she is a lesbian. The court gave custody of the child to his grandmother. "The mother's conduct is illegal and immoral and renders her an unfit parent," Judge Duford Parsons, Jr. said September 7. The mother, Sharon Bottoms, was granted visitation rights with her son on Mondays and Tuesdays, away from her home and her companion. Bottoms's lawyers are appealing the decision to the state supreme court.

—PAT SMITH

## THE MILITANT

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# Egyptian rulers use terror campaign in face of social crisis

BY GREG ROSENBERG

*Where Egypt leads, a lot of others follow — and Egypt is heading into trouble.*  
— British columnist Gwynne Dyer

Under cover of combating a rising tide of bombings and assassinations, the capitalist regime of Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak has stepped up its own wave of terror. Unleashing paramilitary forces and the police, the increasingly unstable government has made at least 5,000 arrests, executed 15 "Islamic radicals" since June, and killed more than 100 other Egyptians over the past year.

The inability of the Mubarak government to halt Egypt's devastating economic slide and social crisis is fueling dissatisfaction and anger among working people.

Media pundits claim the battle is between "secularists" and "fundamentalists" at odds over the future of Egypt, whose population of 57 million is the largest of the majority-Arab countries in the Middle East and northern Africa.

But this explanation fails to explain the explosion of social tensions.

## Economic stagnation

Egypt's gross domestic product — defined as the total market value of goods and services in a year — is about \$37 billion.

This figure is dwarfed by the \$50 billion debt owed to the imperialist banks. The debt grew by 150 percent in the 1980s. Current economic growth rates stand at zero to 1 percent. Prices for food, fuel, clothing, and electricity have skyrocketed, as the government has cut subsidies and lifted controls.

Annual per capita income in 1990 was only \$700. Even this statistic hides the brutal reality for workers and peasants, who receive a far smaller share than Egypt's capitalist families, military officers, and other privileged layers. Official unemployment is 15 percent.

The International Monetary Fund and World Bank are pushing Mubarak to implement more austerity measures to keep cash flowing out of Egypt and into the imperialist centers.

Under these conditions, and in the absence of class-struggle leadership, rightist forces wrapping themselves in the Islamic religion are utilizing the widespread dissatisfaction with the government to stake their claim as the radical opposition to Cairo. Some of these organizations, such as the Gamma al-Islamiya (Islamic Group), utilize terrorist methods.

The Islamic Group, along with similar formations, seeks to turn the economic devastation to their advantage. "They claim that under an Islamic system Egyptians would not have to bribe their children's teachers or shelter in wretched apartment blocks while Cairo's elites cavort in five-star hotels and nightclubs," Stanley Reed writes in *Foreign Affairs*.

The rightist groups scapegoat Egypt's 10 million Coptic Christians as "infidels." Their churches are often burned, shops burglarized, and attacks have left between 150–200 Christians dead.

In the past several years, bombings and assassination attempts attributed to "Islamic militants" have claimed more than 170 lives. These have included six attacks on tourist buses in 1992.

In October 1990, the speaker of Parliament was killed in a Cairo ambush. Attempts on the lives of Information Minister Safwat el-Sharif last April and Interior Minister Hassan al-Alfi in mid-August were unsuccessful. Civilians were killed in the process.

Sheik Mohammed al-Ghazali, who the *New York Times* describes as "Egypt's model of the mainstream Muslim cleric," testified at a recent trial in defense of individuals accused of killing a prominent writer. "A secularist represents a danger to society and the nation that must be eliminated," he said. "It is the duty of the government to kill him."

Mubarak has moved violently in re-

sponse, utilizing savage torture, military assaults on entire neighborhoods, and special military tribunals to try "terrorists."

Amnesty International says that the Egyptian police and military "appear to have been given a licence to kill with impunity."

Last October, 40,000 paramilitary troops stormed Imbaba, a sprawling slum in Cairo. More than 1,500 people were rounded up in a hunt for suspected Islamic activists.

On August 15, an Egyptian court acquitted 24 men in the assassination of the speaker of Parliament. The chief judge, citing the fact that none of the government's 100 witnesses were able to identify a single suspect, said that security authorities subjected the accused to "the ugliest forms of torture," including electric shock and hanging by the arms.

On the same day, the government began the first in a series of trials for 248 people suspected of supporting the Vanguard of Islamic Triumph group. Many face a death sentence if convicted of attempting to overthrow the government or trying to kill officials.

## Alarm in Washington

The increasing instability of Washington's largest loyal ally in the Middle East is setting off alarm bells for the U.S. rulers who have yet to recover the influence they lost in the region when the 1979 Iranian



Under the guise of "fighting terrorism," the Egyptian government has executed 15 people since June. Above: defendants being held in courtroom.

revolution exploded onto the scene and shattered the regime of the Shah.

In addition, the intensified instability that emerged from the Gulf War, as the worldwide depression ravages economies, is taking a big toll on all the bourgeois regimes in the area.

Mubarak loyally followed Washington's lead in the 1990-91 Gulf War, and was rewarded when almost \$56 billion of military debt was written off by the United States.

A major article in the *Wall Street Journal* points out, "Turmoil in Egypt imperils one of America's most important strategic alliances. Since Israel and Egypt made peace at Camp David in 1978, the U.S. has poured \$30 billion of aid into Egypt — second only to the \$40 billion for Israel. Washington's hopes for regional stability

have been pinned largely on this parallel support."

A column by ultrareactionary politician Patrick Buchanan entitled "Who lost the Middle East? All pro-U.S. regimes in area targeted by Islamic radicals" appeared in the August 25 *New York Post*.

Buchanan claims that "Egypt is in a pre-revolutionary state," and that "Islamic radicalism" is spreading throughout the region, "its goal: overthrow of all pro-U.S. regimes ... and imposition of Islamic rule — everywhere."

But what Washington and Cairo fear above all is not "Islamic radicalism," but the entry of workers and peasants in Egypt and throughout the region into politics, which threaten the frail strands of stability still intact in the Middle East.

# Florida jury convicts two racist thugs

BY JIM KENDRICK

MIAMI — On September 7 a West Palm Beach, Florida, jury of five whites and one Black convicted two white men for the vicious racist assault on Christopher Wilson, a Black man. The two were found guilty on all three counts — armed robbery, kidnapping, and attempted murder. The jury's verdict was based especially on Wilson's description of the horrible burning he suffered and his eyewitness identification of the defendants.

Wilson, a Jamaican immigrant from New York, was kidnapped at gunpoint in Tampa on New Year's Day. He was taken to a vacant field, doused with gasoline, set ablaze by his captors, and left to burn to death.

He suffered second- and third-degree burns over 40 percent of his body. Wilson testified in court that one of the men who burned him "came up to me and said, 'Now you are going to die nigger.' A nearby farmer responded to Wilson's screams as he ran from the scene, by hosing him with water and phoning the police.

Mark Kohut, 27, and Charles Rourk, 33, both day laborers from Polk County, east of Tampa, were charged with the assault on Wilson. This was based on the testimony of



Christopher Wilson testifying in court

18-year-old Jeffery Pellett, a third man who participated in the burning. Pellett pleaded guilty to lesser charges in exchange for testifying against Rourk and Kohut.

National Public Radio reported that the verdict came as a surprise to many given the widespread sentiment that the prosecution had not treated the case seriously. The original prosecutor, Len Register, resigned mid-

way through the trial. He "left saying that his boss, Hillsborough state attorney Harry Coe, was 'inept' and unprepared," reported the *Miami Herald*. "Coe forgot to introduce key evidence during the first examination of some witnesses," said the *Herald*. Later, Hillsboro circuit court judge Donald Evans barred the second prosecutor, Assistant State Attorney Paul Johnson, from entering some physical evidence.

The racist assault on Wilson has outraged the Black community in Tampa. The city has a long history of racial attacks, including killings. On September 2 two dozen Blacks picketed the West Palm Beach courthouse where the Wilson trial had been moved to from Tampa. They were there to show their support for Christopher Wilson.

In the midst of the racist burning trial, Tampa police gunned down 21-year-old Edward Lee James Jr., in a Black housing project. The cops claimed self-defense, saying he was a "robbery suspect" who fired on them. Two hundred people poured into the streets to protest the killing of the youth. At a protest rally held in Tampa September 4, Debora Green, James's girlfriend said, "He didn't deserve to die the way he did. Please come together so we can see justice done."

# Los Angeles rally supports immigrants' rights

BY JOHN EVENHUIS AND STUART MACK

LOS ANGELES — Five hundred people gathered at the downtown federal building here August 25 to picket, chant, and speak out in support of full democratic rights for immigrants.

The protest action was called by the Pro-Immigrant Mobilization Coalition, which was formed in order to respond to increasing government attacks on the rights of immigrants.

Recently, California governor Peter Wilson in an open letter to President Bill Clinton called for refusing undocumented immigrants access to health care and education, denying their U.S.-born children citizenship, and creating a national identity card to keep tabs on immigrants.

Many people were eager to explain why they had joined the protest march.

Victor Ontiveros, holding the banner of the gay political group La Red Latina, said

he believes that Wilson is using the economic crisis to win support for his reactionary political positions. "Wilson's playing us against one another," he said.

Mark Salzer, who works with World Service Authority, said, "I believe there shouldn't be any borders at all. Economic woes are being blamed on the immigrant population, when they should be pointing the finger at corporate America. Why isn't Wilson examining the conditions that fueled immigration?" he asked, adding that attacks on the rights of immigrants will lead to curtailment of other rights.

Adalita Zelada, with the group Children of War and the Association of Salvadoran Women, said, "Immigrants are the backbone of this country. Why is it they can't receive equal rights when they are in this country?"

And Kei Utsumi, son of a Japanese immigrant, said, "Immigrants are getting bashed from the very top level of government down to the police. They're just people, like every-

body else. Why should they take the brunt of the problems? The people who are responsible are those in high places."

Slogans on signs included, "We didn't cross the border, the border crossed us!" "Full democratic rights for immigrants!", and "No Re-Pete!", referring to Wilson.

Organizations participating the picket line included: Los Angeles Hotel Workers United, California Immigrant Workers Association, Sewing with Dignity, International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, Hotel and Restaurant Employees Union Local 11, Mexican American Political Association, Aztlan Mexica Nation School, Network for Social Justice and Public Education at UCLA, and others.

The Pro-Immigrant Mobilization Coalition is calling for another action on October 2. Assembling at 11:00 a.m. at Olvera Street Plaza, protesters will march to the downtown federal building.

# GM, Volkswagen spat shows competition for car market

BY GREG ROSENBERG

Sharp conflicts have broken out between the owners of General Motors (GM), the largest U.S. automaker, and Volkswagen (VW), the number-one car company in Europe. Adam Opel, GM's German subsidiary, lags behind as the number-four auto producer in Western Europe.

Fierce competition over the car market in Europe has led to allegations of industrial espionage against VW by GM and Opel. General Motors charges that one of its former executives, who jumped ship to VW along with seven others, systematically gathered and stole trade secrets, including the design for a new small car and extensive price lists for parts.

VW officials have responded that GM is at "war" over market share. VW chairman Ferdinand Piëch described the state of the global auto industry as "displacement competition."

GM countered that VW's words were "grotesque" and suggested a "psychosis-like bunker mentality."

## Depression fuels vicious competition

The depression of the world market system lies at the root of weak economic recoveries throughout Europe. Germany itself is in the midst of its worst recession since WWII.

Output of cars in western Europe has fallen 25 percent so far this year. According to the *Economist*, "West European car sales are expected to fall by more than 2 million, so any one of Europe's six biggest producers could close every factory and hardly be missed." VW suffered a net loss of \$950 million for the first half of 1993.

The capitalist families who own the automobile companies are implementing devastating job cuts and "restructuring" to squeeze more out of auto workers. Mercedes-Benz announced plans to cut 14,000

jobs next year, on top of 14,000 cuts last year and 8,000 layoffs in 1993.

Volkswagen plans to eliminate 15,000 jobs. The head of the German auto bosses' association said that the industry must eliminate 100,000 more jobs and "cut costs" in the next two years to compete.

## Industrial spying

Auto boss José Ignacio López is at the center of the current dispute. López earned the nickname "the Rüsselsheim strangler" for his "cost-cutting" methods at Opel, which is based in Rüsselsheim.

A leading GM executive, López left Detroit in March to become VW's production executive, after GM declined to implement his reactionary fantasy of building a "super lean" production plant, where cars would be assembled in less than half the time taken in factories in Japan. GM, which as part of a violent assault on auto workers in the U.S., is planning to slash 74,000 jobs, is now playing the victim. Volkswagen chairman Piëch came to the company in January to "jolt VW from its losses and lethargy," according to Britain's *Financial Times*. Piëch, born into enormous wealth, says "I was born a domesticated pig but live the life of a wild boar."

Shortly after López left, GM accused him of stealing manufacturing secrets.

López denied the claims. In July, he said that GM documents had inadvertently ended up in a VW guesthouse and that he had ordered them destroyed on learning of their existence. VW implied that GM/Opel planted secrets in VW computers.

On August 26, 60 German cops and investigators searched VW's head offices for secret data allegedly stolen from GM. To date, no criminal charges have been filed. The FBI has also opened an investigation.

Spying, lying, and theft are a built-in



Volkswagen chairman Ferdinand Piëch

feature of capitalist trade. But the VW affair underscores the depth of competition between the imperialist powers, the long reach of General Motors, and the crisis plaguing all the automakers.

## Worries in Bonn

While the *New York Times* editorialized that the dispute was a "Summer Laff Fest," auto bosses and the German government are worrying aloud over the dispute.

Franz Wauschkuhn, spokesman for German economics minister Günter Rexrodt, exclaimed of the VW/Opel affair that "a way must be found for them to work together... Asian competitors must be rubbing their hands."

BMW chairman Bernd Pischetsrieder told the German *Die Welt* newspaper that "there is much more at stake than a loss of image for the automotive industry. Industry leaders in general are coming under fire."

Wendelin Wiedeking, chairman of Porsche, said that "it would be better for the whole of the automotive industry if the dispute between VW and Opel had remained in internal channels and not been fought in public."

## Clinton's plan to streamline gov't: axe 252,000 workers

BY GREG ROSENBERG

Striking a demagogic pose in front of a forklift laden with thousands of pages of government regulations, President Bill Clinton and Vice-president Al Gore fired the latest salvo in the bipartisan war designed to make workers and farmers pay for the capitalist economic crisis.

The Gore-authored report entitled "From Red Tape to Results — Creating a Government That Works Better and Costs Less," is a page out of the handbook of Texas billionaire Ross Perot. "The government is broken," exclaimed Clinton at a September 7 news conference, "and we intend to fix it."

The Clinton administration's proposals are designed to win a sympathetic response from workers, farmers, and small business owners who are all too familiar with the bureaucratic nightmare of various federal, state, and local agencies that administer everything from food stamps to unemployment benefits to flood relief aid.

The administration proposes to eliminate 252,000 federal jobs by 1998. This accounts for 12 percent of the federal work force.

Borrowing language from the bosses' employee relations office, the Clinton plan would supposedly "empower employees to get results."

How would the Clinton plan "empower" federal employees? By "decentralizing decision-making and increasing managers' control" for one. It would "cut in half the time required to fire employees."

The current seniority-based pay system would be junked in favor of something called "broadbanding," which means that scales for job classifications would be widened. This, according to the *Wall Street Journal*, "could allow the best workers to get higher pay than their colleagues."

The plan would "give companies more responsibility for monitoring their own compliance with safety and health regulations, taking some of the burden off the Occupational Safety and Health Administration," said the *Wall Street Journal*. Companies could either train employees to "handle" safety inspections or hire outside inspectors.

In line with Clinton's attacks on entitlements, the consumer price index would be revised. The index determines adjustments to Social Security and other benefits.

## U.S. rulers threaten war against Iraq, Korea



U.S. troops practice war moves along border of North and South Korea.

## 'U.S. capitalist rulers are world's true warlords'

The following greetings were sent to Kim Il Sung, general secretary of the Central Committee of the Workers Party of Korea and president of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea), by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party of the United States on the 45th anniversary of the founding of the North Korean republic.

Dear Comrade Kim Il Sung,

On behalf of the Socialist Workers Party, I send you revolutionary greetings on the occasion of the 45th anniversary of the founding of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Our party reaffirms our internationalist solidarity with the Korean people and looks forward to the day when we can join you in celebrating a united Korea.

We mark this anniversary as government officials in Washington continue to prepare

world public opinion for aggression against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The latest threats came from U.S. defense secretary Les Aspin and General Colin Powell in remarks outlining the Clinton administration's military budget. Aspin emphasized that the thousands of U.S. troops would remain in Korea. Powell belligerently cited North Korea as one of the "places where the United States armed force might have to go fight and win."

The U.S. capitalist rulers, the world's true warlords, are carrying out bloody assaults against the people of Somalia right now. Imperialist wars and threats of military aggression in Iraq, Iran, North Korea, Sudan, Yugoslavia, and elsewhere grow out of the deepening disorder and instability of the crisis-ridden world capitalist system. The exploited and oppressed of the world — from the Korean peninsula, to workers, farmers, and youth in the United States and

other imperialist countries — are paying dearly for the results of depression conditions and the sharpening rivalry between Washington and its competitors in capitalist Europe, Japan, and the Pacific.

The Socialist Workers Party stands in solidarity with the Korean people and your struggle for reunification of the country and an end to the decades-long nuclear blackmail held over your head by Washington and its junior partners in Seoul. We pledge to continue telling the truth about Washington's war aims and to join with other working people and youth to fight efforts by the U.S. government to isolate and carry out acts of aggression against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

We are confident the Korean people will be victorious in the struggle for a united country.

Comradely,  
Jack Barnes  
National Secretary

## Continued from front page

rine Corps would have 174,000 active-duty troops, only slightly lower than current levels, and well above the level projected by the Bush Administration. In addition, B-1 and B-2 bombers would be modified to be able to drop conventional as well as nuclear weapons.

"To carry out the Bush Administration's two-war strategy with fewer forces," states a September 2 article in the *New York Times*, "the Clinton Administration planned to store enough weapons and equipment for several Army brigades at several overseas locations for use in the Persian Gulf or in a conflict in Korea."

"Our best assessment was that these two areas of the world... are the two most likely, and the two that would be absolutely devastating to our vital interests. We would have to do something about them," stated Powell in motivating the military's "two-war" strategy.

Washington's warmongering stance toward North Korea is rooted in its opposition toward reunification of North and South. In recent months, U.S. officials have charged that Pyongyang is developing nuclear weapons, mobilizing its troops, and testing a new missile.

A major article in the September 3 *Wall Street Journal* claims that "North Korea is growing increasingly bellicose," while quoting U.S. military officials in Korea who point to the "threat."

While the Pentagon has been stepping up its campaign against Korea it continues to periodically bomb areas in Iraq. U.S. troops are also getting more deeply involved in fighting in Somalia, and the Clinton administration has been mapping out contingency plans to bomb Serb forces in Bosnia and place U.S. troops on the ground there.

"Our forces must be sized and structured to preserve the flexibility and the capability to act unilaterally, should we choose to do so," stated Aspin.

The Clinton administration plans to improve the training of 15 reserve army brigades so they can more rapidly be called up for combat. The Pentagon also plans to keep around 100,000 troops in Europe and 100,000 in Asia for the foreseeable future. The 36,000 U.S. troops in South Korea will be left untouched.

# Iowa parole board receives 200 letters supporting Curtis

BY CHRIS REMPLE

DES MOINES, Iowa — "We are here today to submit to the Iowa State Board of Parole more than 200 letters urging parole for Mark Curtis," stated John Studer, coordinator of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, to a news conference September 2 outside the parole board's offices here. WHO-TV-13 covered the news conference, airing its story at noon, 6:00 p.m., and 10:00 p.m., as well as on the local newsbreak on CNN.

Curtis, a union and political activist, was framed by the Des Moines police in March 1988 on false charges of raping a 15-year-old Black high school student. At the time, Curtis was involved in protesting the arrest of 17 coworkers in an immigration raid at the meat-packing plant where he worked.

He was convicted in September 1988 after an unfair trial in which he was prevented from presenting most of the evidence that could have convinced a jury of the frame-up. For example, he was unable to discuss the beating he received at the hands of the cops or explain how, as they beat him, they told him, "You're a Mexican lover, just like you love those coloreds."

Curtis was sentenced to 10 years in prison on the sexual abuse charge and 25 years on a burglary charge, which was tacked on one month after Curtis's arrest simply to help the prosecution secure a longer sentence.

In 1992 Curtis won a \$64,000 judgment in federal court against the Des Moines police who beat him. The judge, Charles Wolle, stated he found the police version of the beating "not credible."

The parole board has denied Curtis parole on four occasions. They have pressured him to enroll in a Sexual Offenders Treatment Program, which requires an admission of guilt, as an avenue to parole. Curtis maintains his innocence and cannot go through such a program.

This year Curtis and his supporters face a new challenge in demanding he be pa-

roled. Legislation recently passed in Iowa takes away the right of prisoners to be present at a yearly parole hearing. The board can now meet and decide who gets a hearing and who does not based solely on the word of prison officials.

## 'An excellent candidate for parole'

The letters submitted to the parole board, which came from many states and a number of other countries, are from elected officials, union leaders, civil rights activists, professors, religious figures, and others.

Coleman Young, mayor of Detroit, sent a letter stating, "For the third time I am writing to express interest and concern for the Mark Curtis case. I believe that a careful review of his life prior to incarceration, his behavior in prison, and the support he will receive upon release indicates that he is an excellent candidate for parole."

Mario Consoli, president of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union Local 187 in Lawrence, Massachusetts, wrote, "We work in factories with workers from more than a dozen countries and we speak many languages. We are proud to speak up for a fellow worker like Mark who upholds the principle of equality and unity among all workers." Fifteen other officers and members of the local signed the letter and sent \$51 in donations.

Six members of United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 1149 at the Monfort packinghouse in Marshalltown, Iowa, sent letters. The UFCW was the union Curtis was a member of at the time of his arrest.

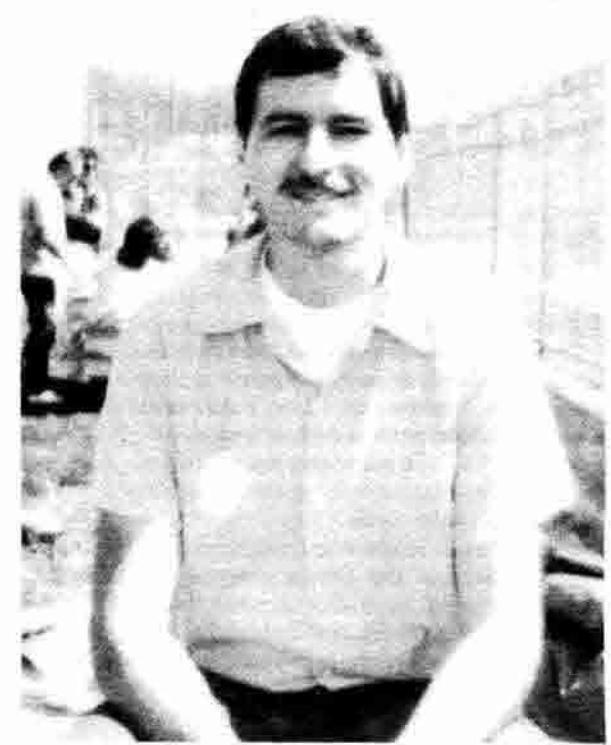
Four members of the International Association of Machinists Local 1833 in the Twin Cities, Minnesota, sent letters. One of them, Kimberly Washington, wrote, "As a Black woman I know that rarely are the perpetrators of acts of violence against Black women brought to justice. I believe that in the case of Mark Curtis justice has not been served."

Calvin Moore, an international vice-president of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic

Workers (OCAW) union, and two local presidents sent letters. Six members of OCAW Local 8-743 in New Castle, Delaware, stated in their letter, "Your previous demands that Mark is ineligible for parole because he refuses to enter a Sexual Offenders Treatment Program (SOTP), which would require him to give up his insistence that he is innocent, strike us as most unfair."

J. P. Simpson, president of a branch of the New Zealand Meat Workers and Related Trades Union in Christchurch, New Zealand, explained, "I feel it is extreme to maintain incarceration solely on the grounds that until you admit guilt you must not be freed. One's right to maintain innocence should remain sacrosanct and should not be used as a bargaining tool."

Supporters in Greece sent letters from the counselor of the Labor Institute, the secretary-general of the Athens Labor Center, the president of the Union for the Solidarity Between the Peoples of Greece and Turkey,



Militant  
Mark Curtis. Supporters are extending campaign of letters to Iowa parole board requesting his release.

and the executive committee of Kasapi-Hellas, an organization of Filipino migrant workers in Greece, among others.

Twenty letters arrived in Des Moines on the day of the news conference, including eight from Britain.

## Defense committee extends Parole Now! campaign

The Mark Curtis Defense Committee is urging supporters to continue sending letters to the Iowa State Board of Parole. "We don't know yet when the board will determine whether or not to grant Mark a parole hearing," John Studer, coordinator of the defense committee explained. "Family members who call have been given several different dates. The letters we have received so far indicate the tremendous potential that exists to reach out and win support for Mark's parole. In fact," Studer said, "the ruling against the cops for beating Mark,

the fact that he has now served almost five years in prison and has served out the sexual abuse sentence make it increasingly difficult for the parole board to simply deny Mark parole.

"I encourage supporters everywhere to continue campaigning among unionists, elected officials, religious leaders, solidarity activists, and others for more letters to the parole board during the month of September," continued Studer. "We will continue to take them to the board until it makes its decision."

— C.R.

# Extreme weather conditions exacerbate farm crisis

## Drought threatens small farmers in South

BY JOSÉ ALVARADO

EPES, Alabama — While farmers in the Midwest are suffering from several months of flooding, southern farmers have been dealing with a severe drought. In South Carolina, for example, 17 days of temperatures above 100 degrees, accompanied by the absence of rain, have meant many farmers losing from half to all of their crop.

Leon Crump, state director for the Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund (Federation/LAF) reports the overall state loss in agricultural products will be more than \$260 million due to the drought. Of the 23,000 members of the federation, 10,000 are small family farmers, most of whom are Black.

Many small farmers in the South plant tobacco in addition to produce crops since it usually survives drought conditions. But this year, the drought has been so severe that even the tobacco crop has not been able to mature, Crump explained.

Funds available for drought-affected areas in the South will be administered by the Agricultural Stabilization Commission Service (ASCS). But to receive aid, farmers had to be registered prior to the drought and apply by a specific cutoff date, information which is not easily accessible to many farmers.

"The drought of 1993," reports John Zippert, general programs director for the Federation/LAF, "has affected all states from the Carolinas to Alabama. Half of all crops in Alabama have been affected and half of those are wiped out."

"The gravity of the drought is just now becoming apparent in reduced farm crop yields," Zippert said. Hundreds of Black farmers, already facing loss of land at the rate of 1,000 acres per day, will be driven off the land by the drought conditions or forced to accept even more loans on top of already unpayable debts.

## More flooding, fungus hit Midwest region

BY JON HILLSON

MINNEAPOLIS — Still reeling from the impact of summer floods and a patchwork of inadequate government relief measures, working farmers in the Upper Midwest grain belt have been dealt new blows by heavy rains and the discovery of ruinous crop mold in barley and spring wheat.

"Farmers who had just planted fields that had finally dried up after the summer floods got completely washed out," said Delores



Most of Virginia farmer Philip Minor's corn has died due to drought

Swoboda, a leader of Groundswell, a family farm organization based in Wanda, Minnesota.

In the wake of the latest round of floods, the Minnesota Extension Service announced that contaminating fungi and vomitoxin had been found in spring wheat and barley, two of the Upper Midwest's largest crops. The fungus, called a scab, shrinks grain kernels and reduces their value. Scabby wheat can also produce vomitoxin, which can cause headaches, dizziness, shivering, vomiting, and vision problems if consumed.

Owners of grain elevators are now refusing to buy wheat and barley from the current harvests, sending shock waves through rural communities. In North Dakota, half the crop is fungus-infected, with similar damage in South Dakota. Grain farmers in southern Canada are also experiencing scabby wheat.

By an August 31 deadline, 281 northwestern Minnesota farmers had signed up for a government program that offered some compensation for the contaminated grain, provided the crop was destroyed.

Hundreds of farmers jammed regional unemployment offices in Worthington and Willmar — to sign up for a new program that allows farmers to file for unemployment compensation through the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

But the help these farmers will get varies widely, and farmers have been told that they may have to return money received if their 1993 income is too high.

In addition, young people and spouses, who often carry out indispensable tasks on the farm, are ineligible for the insurance.

Farmers who own large numbers of livestock are also disqualified since the animals count as income. "This is really something," Swoboda says, "because if you don't have money you have to sell the livestock anyway since you can't afford to buy feed for it."

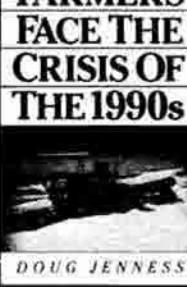
Testifying at a hearing September 2 in Crookston, Minnesota, farmer Jerry Kruger, who is destroying 2,000 acres of scabby wheat, told state and federal officials, "I wasted my year, my family's work, my seed, my fertilizer. It's all down the tubes."

Looming ahead is a potentially killing hard frost, which will decimate the remaining healthy crops if it occurs before the harvest.

For thousands of indebted working farmers, this raises the threat of massive auctions and foreclosures by federal agencies and rural banks.

## From Pathfinder

### FARMERS FACE THE CRISIS OF THE 1990S



by Doug Jenness

Pamphlet 35 pp., \$3.50

Available from bookstores listed on page 12 or from Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Add \$3 for shipping, \$.50 for each additional copy.

# Palestinian struggle for self-determination spans eight decades

BY HILDA CUZCO

For more than 80 years the Arab peoples of the Middle East have struggled against imperialist domination. The Palestinian fight for self-determination has been an important part of that battle and today continues to be at the center of the class struggle in that part of the world.

At the end of World War I the imperialist rulers of Britain and France grabbed the Arab territories to divide among themselves. Under a pact signed by London and Paris in 1916, Lebanon and Syria became possessions of France, while the British government took Palestine, Jordan, and Iraq.

The British soon began to encourage Jewish immigration to Palestine, backing the plans of the World Zionist Organization to establish a "Jewish" state. Zionism (from Zion, a biblical name for Jerusalem), founded by Theodor Herzl in 1897, was an integral part of the imperialist drive in the late 19th and early 20th centuries to penetrate, subjugate, and colonize the Middle East.

During the World War II Nazi persecution and following the war as well, most Jews who went to the Middle East and settled in Palestine did so only after they were denied entry by the United States and Britain.

## Palestinian resistance

Resistance by Palestinians to colonization of their homeland spurred the development of national consciousness and opposition to British rule during the 1920s and 30s. Palestinians staged a general strike against the British in 1936 and called for the suspension of Jewish colonization. This was the start of a massive revolt that would last three years. It coincided with other anti-imperialist struggles throughout the region, including an uprising that brought an end to British rule in Egypt in 1937 and a general strike that shook the French government's grip on Syria. At the height of this upsurge, half the British army was tied down in the Middle East.

Although with tremendous difficulty the British army was eventually able to crush the Palestinian revolt in 1939, paving the way for stepped-up colonization by the Zionists.

## Israel does Washington's bidding

After World War II, U.S. imperialism emerged as the strongest power, replacing the British and French rulers in the conquest of the Middle East. On Nov. 17, 1947, the United Nations, pressured by Washington, voted to partition Palestine into Jewish and Palestinian states. By May

1948, when the state of Israel was established, 200,000 Palestinians had been driven out of their homeland.

Ever since, the Israeli regime has served as one of the main bulwarks of imperialism in the Mideast. In June 1967, Tel Aviv — with Washington's backing — invaded Egypt, Jordan, and Syria. Despite bitter resistance, Israeli troops seized the Gaza Strip and Sinai Peninsula from Egypt, East Jerusalem and the West Bank from Jordan, and the Golan Heights from Syria.

This aggression by Israel spurred a new upsurge in the Palestinian struggle. The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), originally set up in 1964 at the initiative of Egyptian president Gamal Abdul Nasser, developed into a revolutionary organization based in the refugee camps. The PLO program called for uncompromising struggle against Zionism and the establishment of a single, democratic, secular state in Palestine. Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians were attracted to its banner.

The Palestinian struggle for self-determination was dealt some heavy blows in the late 1970s and '80s. In 1979 the Egyptian government signed a separate peace treaty with Israel, which gave Tel Aviv more confidence to move against the PLO forces.

In addition, there were no further revolu-



Israeli troops terrorize Palestinian youth in Ramallah, West Bank. Accord would require removal of Israel's forces from some parts of Gaza and Jericho.

tionsary advances in the region after the 1979 overthrow of the Shah's dictatorship in Iran. The Iranian revolution itself, which gave an impulse to the Palestinian struggle, was contained and a capitalist regime consolidated in Tehran. The reactionary invasion of Iran by the Iraqi army in 1980 and the eight-year war that followed gave the Israeli regime room to renew its attacks against Palestinians and other Arab peoples.

## 'Intifada' — new Palestinian resistance

A new uprising of the Palestinian people known as the *intifada* began in December 1987. Demonstrations and strikes quickly spread throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Thousands of young

fighters gained experience in mass struggles and formed a network of hundreds of organizations in the territories. The *intifada* won broad support among workers and farmers around the world, putting a spotlight on Palestinian demands for justice and the brutality of the Israeli regime.

In November 1988, the Palestine National Council (PNC), which serves as the Palestinian parliament, took a major diplomatic initiative and declared "the establishment of the State of Palestine." It also demanded that Israel withdraw from "all the Palestinian and Arab territories it occupied in 1967." The Palestinian's demands, which

Continued on Page 7

## Palestinians discuss limited troop withdrawal

**Continued from front page**  
enough bloodshed," he said. "I'm very, very optimistic. God willing, we'll see the Palestinian flag flying over Gaza."

According to a poll published in an East Jerusalem newspaper, 70 percent of the people in Gaza and 75 percent in Jericho support the agreement. It would "at least get us out of the occupation and poverty we live in," Zaher Bedir, a 27-year-old barber in Gaza said.

There is not unanimous agreement among Palestinians, however. A reporter for *Bethlehem Press*, in a phone interview from the occupied territories, said many Palestinians he had spoken to were concerned that the proposals for limited self-rule would — instead of helping — in fact set back the Palestinian struggle to establish a democratic, secular state in the entire area that was formerly Palestine. "We must refuse the agreement," he stated.

The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) also argue against the

accords. Hamas has organized several protests in Gaza. Participants in one march of 1,000 chanted, "Death to Israel, death to America" and "Arafat, tell Rabin that self-rule will not be." Yassir Arafat is the chairman of the PLO; Yitzhak Rabin is Israel's prime minister.

## Elected Palestinian council

The proposed document calls for an elected Palestinian council to act as a self-governing authority for Palestinians in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip "for a transitional period not exceeding five years, leading to a permanent settlement based on [United Nations] Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338." These resolutions call for Israeli withdrawal from territories seized in Tel Aviv's 1967 war against Egypt, Jordan, and Syria; "acknowledgement of the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and political independence of every state in the area," including Israel; and negotiations to resolve the conflict between Israel and the Arab countries.

Under the agreement, the transfer of authority in education, culture, health, social welfare, direct taxation, and tourism would begin immediately. Israeli troops would be redeployed outside populated areas and Palestinians would organize their own police force. After the council's inauguration, additional powers and responsibilities may be worked out. The document postpones decisions on the status of Jerusalem, refugees, and the future of Jewish settlements.

PLO officials told the *New York Times* that they expect the accord on self-rule, and a related agreement on mutual recognition between the PLO and Israel, to be signed in Washington, D.C., within weeks.

## Debate in Israel

Inside Israel the proposed accord has triggered a massive debate. Many Israeli working people support the agreement. In one of the largest public rallies since the massive protests in 1982 that denounced Israel's invasion of Lebanon, tens of thousands demonstrated in Tel Aviv September 4 to show their support. Organizers said 200,000 people turned out at the rally, while police put the figure at 50,000.

There is also serious opposition to the agreement, particularly among settlers in the occupied territories. Tens of thousands of rightist demonstrators surrounded Rabin's offices September 7, accusing him of trea-

son for negotiating a "land-for-peace" agreement with the Palestinians.

Some members of the opposition party Likud have threatened to annul any agreement if they come to power. "If Likud wins, that would show that the people disapprove, and a Likud government would have to act according to the wishes of the people," Ariel Sharon, former defense minister, said. Other Likud leaders have cautioned against such statements.

These divisions over the accord are compounded because Israel has been hard hit by the worldwide economic crisis and the shifting political relationships in the region. Once the center pin of U.S. policy in the Middle East, Tel Aviv has more and more found itself jockeying for influence, in competition with a host of capitalist regimes in the area, many of whom have also proven themselves willing to do Washington's bidding. Because of this, the U.S. government has been less willing to put up with Israeli actions that it feels conflict with its own interests.

As recently as 1982, Israel was able to launch a massive invasion of Lebanon. More than 27,000 Lebanese and Palestinians were killed and 400,000 left homeless. But last year, when the Israeli army expelled 400 Palestinians from the occupied territories, it was condemned not only by the United Nations, but by the U.S. State Department as well. Washington also refused to grant Israel \$10 billion in loan guarantees in 1992, unless Tel Aviv agreed to sharply limit the development of new settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Arab regimes in the region have offered reluctant support for the accord. The foreign ministers of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates issued a statement calling the agreement "the first step toward achieving full Israeli withdrawal from Arab lands and at the forefront, Jerusalem."

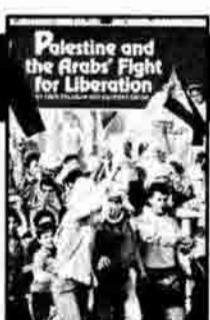
The Syrian regime of President Hafez al-Assad told Arafat it was up to the Palestinian people and their institutions to approve what they deemed fit. The *New York Times* reported September 6 that Israeli and Syrian officials are close to reaching agreement on return of the Golan Heights, seized from Syria in 1967, in exchange for Syria spelling out its offer of "full peace."

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# Miners snap up 'Militant'

BY GREG ROSENBERG

"Striking coal miners and their supporters attending a Labor Day celebration and rally in Evansville, Indiana, bought 100 single copies of the *Militant* and 3 introductory subscriptions\* from *Militant* readers bringing solidarity to their strike," writes David Marshall from St. Louis.

Supporters of the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, and *New International* in various cities around the world got the international circulation campaign off to a good start August 28, and came within two percentage points of being on target after one week of efforts.

The Evansville rally is a good example of what's possible as we launch a single-issues sales campaign this month.

"This paper is very informative," said one miner as he reached into his pocket for money at the Evansville march. "It's hard to get information about our strike and other things going on in the labor movement. Y'all are doing a good job."

Leading the international drive are supporters of the working-class press in Australia. They've already sold 17 percent of their goal!

In Houston, one of the top five areas in the United States after the first week of sales, Sandy Lee reports that five oil workers have bought subscriptions to the *Militant*. They are planning two special efforts next week to reach out to students at Pan-American University in the Rio Grande Valley along with a trip to Louisiana to introduce oil workers and students to the publications there.

Miami supporters, second on the chart for U.S. distributors this week, participated in a variety of political activities, including building on the broad opposition to the U.S.-government embargo of



Militant/Diana Cantu

Militant sales table at Labor Day parade in New York

Cuba. At a meeting of the Alliance of Workers of the Cuban community three people purchased subscriptions.

One airline worker, a member of the International Association of Machinists, has already sold 4 subscriptions to his coworkers. Meanwhile, a Haitian man dropped into the local Pathfinder bookstore and bought a *Militant* subscription and a copy of *New International* no. 7 "Washington's Assault on Iraq—The Opening Guns of World War

III."

Distributors around the world are taking advantage of the opening of college campuses to introduce the socialist press to students.

Supporters of the publications who are members of industrial trade unions will want to make sure to send in goals to be listed on the chart. To be counted on the scoreboard, subscriptions and *New International* report forms must be in the *Militant* business office by Tuesday, 12:00 noon E.D.T.

# Clinton's new medical plan: workers to pay more for less

BY NAOMI CRAINE

The White House claims that the medical benefits provided under President Bill Clinton's plan to reorganize the health insurance system will be "as comprehensive as those offered by most Fortune 500 companies." But an outline of the scheme presented September 4 showed otherwise. In fact, many workers will end up paying more money for less care than they currently receive.

Dental care for adults, for example, will not be provided. According to one study, workers at more than 90 percent of large corporations currently have dental coverage. Hearing aids and eyeglasses for those over 18 would not be covered under the plan either.

Care in a nursing home or similar facility would be limited to 100 days per year; if a person needed longer-term care they would have to foot the rest of the bill themselves. Patients will have to pay the first \$250 for any prescription drugs, and 20 percent of costs above that amount. Undocumented immigrants and prisoners would not be eligible for the benefits at all.

A few of these restrictions would be relaxed in the year 2000, if there has been sufficient "savings from reform," according to documents released by the administration. These savings are expected to come in large part from cuts in current government medical plans such as Medicare for the elderly and Medicaid for poor families.

The estimated average cost of this package to workers and employers is \$1,800 per year for individuals and \$4,200 for families, of which the employee will have to pay 20 percent. But the cost will be higher for some, as prices are expected to vary by region and "market conditions."

Workers will be forced to pay federal income taxes on benefits that exceed those in the "standard" package. In addition, employers will no longer be able to treat benefits above the minimum plan as a tax deductible expense, giving added weight to the drive by the bosses in auto and other industries to reduce health benefits and force workers to pay more

of the costs. Farmers and other self-employed individuals will have to pay for the package themselves. Though the premiums will be tax deductible, this would still cost a family thousands of dollars.

White House documents also say that under the Clinton plan, the government could impose a monetary penalty on anyone who failed to enroll in a health plan. These proposals would be phased in state-by-state over four years. In addition to funds generated through cuts in existing health programs, the government projects raising \$12–16 billion a year in increased taxes on alcohol and cigarettes.

## Palestinian fight spans decades

Continued from Page 6

were based on the ongoing *intifada*, were rejected by Tel Aviv and Washington.

The Palestinian workers, farmers, and youth face a considerable challenge of leadership in their struggle. The various capitalist governments in the Middle East have attempted to use the banner of the Palestinian "cause" to advance their own interests.

During the Gulf War in 1990–91, for example, the government of Saddam Hussein in Iraq called for a "linkage" of its withdrawal from Kuwait with the Palestinian's demand for self-determination. The leadership of the PLO endorsed this

linkage to Baghdad's reactionary policies, thereby weakening the Palestinian struggle.

The recent accord reached between Israeli officials and PLO leaders marks a new opening for the Palestinian struggle. For the first time the Israeli regime has agreed to withdraw its troops and give up a portion of territory seized from the Palestinians — something Tel Aviv swore it would never do.

The workers and young people who carried out the *intifada* now face the challenge of using the political space that will be opened up to develop a working-class leadership and advance the struggle for a unified, democratic Palestine.

# WHERE WE STAND

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END OF WEEK ONE

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Detroit	16	85	19%
Houston	10	60	17%
Philadelphia	14	90	16%
Des Moines, IA	12	90	13%
Salt Lake City, UT	10	85	12%
Newark, NJ	14	130	11%
Pittsburgh	9	85	11%
Chicago	13	130	10%
Seattle	7	70	10%
Birmingham, AL	6	75	8%
Los Angeles	14	185	8%
Brooklyn, NY	8	130	6%
New York	8	135	6%
San Francisco	7	120	6%
Greensboro, NC	4	75	5%
Atlanta	4	80	5%
Morgantown, WV	3	65	5%
Baltimore	3	70	4%
Washington, DC	3	75	4%
Twin Cities, MN	4	110	4%
St. Louis	2	75	3%
Boston	3	115	3%
Cleveland	1	75	1%
Albany, NY	0	5	0%
Albuquerque, NM	0	2	0%
New Haven, CT	0	15	0%
Portland, OR	0	15	0%
<b>U.S. TOTAL</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>2,367</b>	<b>9%</b>
		<b>42</b>	<b>581</b>
			<b>10</b>
			<b>898</b>
<b>AUSTRALIA</b>			
	6	35	17%
			1
		10	2
			20
<b>BELGIUM</b>			
	0	5	0%
		0	4
			0
			10
<b>BRITAIN</b>			
Sheffield	4	35	11%
Manchester	4	40	10%
London	6	65	9%
<b>BRITAIN TOTAL</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>10%</b>
		1	9
		6	6
			60
<b>CANADA</b>			
Vancouver	5	70	7%
Montreal	4	70	6%
Toronto	0	85	0%
<b>CANADA TOTAL</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>4%</b>
		7	37
		1	115
<b>FRANCE</b>			
	0	6	0%
		0	3
		0	0
			10
<b>ICELAND</b>			
	0	10	0%
		0	1
		0	3
<b>NEW ZEALAND</b>			
Auckland	9	65	14%
Christchurch	4	35	11%
<b>N.Z. TOTAL</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>13%</b>
		0	7
		0	20
<b>PUERTO RICO</b>			
	0	2	0%
		1	5
		0	10
<b>SWEDEN</b>			
	7	60	12%
		3	20
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>2,950</b>	<b>8%</b>
		<b>55</b>	<b>677</b>
			<b>23</b>
			<b>1,196</b>

## IN THE UNIONS

	The MILITANT	PERSPECTIVA MUNDIAL	NEW INTERNATIONAL
	SOLD / GOAL	SOLD / GOAL	SOLD / GOAL
<b>UNITED STATES</b>			
ACTWU	3	32	0
IAM	5	90	0
ILGWU	0	—	5
OCAW	8	—	0
UAW	9	100	1
UFCW	5	—	0
USWA	2	85	0
UTU	2	86	0
<b>U.S. TOTAL</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>393</b>	<b>6</b>
		14	0
<b>AUSTRALIA</b>			
AMEU	0	3	0
FPU	0	3	0
NUW	0	2	0
<b>AUSTRALIA TOTAL</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>
		—	4
<b>NEW ZEALAND</b>			
EU	0	7	0
MWU	0	2	0
UFBGWU	1	8	0
<b>NZ TOTAL</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>0</b>
		—	3
<b>SWEDEN</b>			
Food workers	0	3	0
Metal workers	0	5	0
Transport workers	0	2	0
<b>SWEDEN TOTAL</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>
		—	9

ACTWU — Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union; AEEU — Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Workers Union; AMEU — Automotive, Metal and Engineering Union; CAW — Canadian Auto Workers; EU — Engineers' Union; FPU — Food Processors' Union; IAM — International Association of Machinists; ILGWU — International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union; MWU — Meat Workers' Union; NUM — National Union of Mineworkers; NUW — National Union of Workers; OCAW — Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers; RMT — Rail, Maritime, and Transport Workers; TGWU — Transport and General Workers' Union; UAW — United Auto Workers; UFBGWU — United Food, Beverage and General Workers' Union; UFCW — United Food and Commercial Workers; UMWA — United Mine Workers of America; USWA — United Steelworkers of America; UTU — United Transportation Union

# Zionism vs. 'Hands off Palestine!'

## Debate on Jewish question at 1920 congress is of interest to workers today

Below we reprint excerpts of the new Pathfinder book *To See the Dawn: Baku, 1920 — First Congress of the Peoples of the East*.

Zionism, the justification for the founding and perpetuation of the Israeli colonial-settler state, has been a subject of debate since it was initially introduced in the last century.

At the Baku congress, organized by the Communist International (Comintern) in September 1920, delegates from more than two dozen peoples of Asia met with leaders of workers' parties in Russia, Europe, and North America. They hammered out a common policy in the fight against imperialist domination and capitalist exploitation.

Among the debated topics was the Jewish question. The first statement here is the declaration of Poale Zion, a Zionist group that supported Soviet power.

In contrast, the statement by the Central Bureau of Jewish Sections of the Communist Party of Russia took as its starting point the revolutionary struggle of the international working class, arguing that Jewish workers must say, "Hands off Palestine!" This view was that of the Comintern.

Readers will find the contrasting views of interest today. Subheadings are by the *Militant*. Copyright © by Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission.

### Settle and colonize Palestine on communist principles

#### Statement of Jewish Communist Party (Poale Zion) delegation to the Baku congress<sup>1</sup>

The British bourgeoisie stands at the head of the colonial predators in the oppression of the peoples of the East. The interests of British imperialism demand possession of Mesopotamia and Syria in order to connect India with Egypt, and thereby with the metropolitan center. In the same way, Palestine's advantageous location gives it particular value in the eyes of the British imperialists, who are

1. First printed in *Kommunist* (Baku), September 8, 1920; published here courtesy of the Azerbaijan State Archives.

Poale Zion (Workers of Zion) was a coalition of Jewish nationalist organizations whose stated aim was to combine the ideas of socialism with Zionism. Its Russian branch, which claimed 15,000 members in 1917 opposed the October revolution. A left wing of this branch split in August 1919, taking the name Jewish Communist Party (Poale Zion); it was represented at the Comintern's Second Congress. A number of members of this party joined the Communist Party of Russia in December 1922.

For the debate on Zionism at the Second Congress, see Riddell, *Workers of the World*, vol. 1, pp. 260-62, 266-70, and 271-76.

openly striving to transform it into their colony.

This endeavor, however, is meeting stubborn resistance from Palestine's population. For capitalist Britain, which exhausted its economic resources in the war and ruined its industry to a significant degree, is unable to supply its colonies with goods even in prewar quantities. Britain's colonial policy now takes the form of open economic plunder and unrestrained violence, based on military force. All in all, therefore, Britain is incapable of doing anything to help the country.

These facts compel the British bourgeoisie to seek allies in Palestine among the local population. The series of diplomatic steps that led to the notorious document signed in San Remo were an insidious maneuver to win the sympathies of the Jewish population.<sup>2</sup>

#### Jewish colonization

The Jewish population, after having lived through the nightmarish tyranny of Jemal Pasha, at first reacted favorably to this crafty maneuver, greeting the British as saviors announcing a new era.<sup>3</sup> But subsequently British imperialism's policy found expression in a prohibition of the immigration of Jewish working people from other countries, because of fear that they would bring in Bolshevism. The growth and development of Jewish colonization was openly obstructed. Moreover, British imperialism supported the self-seeking endeavors of the Jewish propertied classes there to the detriment of the vital interests of the Jewish working masses. All this brought a rapid sobering up of the working layers of Palestinian Jews, who have now entered into a determined struggle against the British occupiers.

In response to this, British diplomacy began to resort to tried and tested means of suppression of any revolutionary movement in the country. They began to incite nationalist feelings among the Jewish and Arab masses, turning one against the other, in an attempt to create in this fratricidal struggle a basis for their rule.

The criminal character of this policy of the British occupiers found clear confirmation.

2. A conference of six Allied powers, meeting in Remo, Italy, in April 1920, awarded the British government a mandate over Palestine while endorsing London's support for establishment there of a "Jewish national home."

3. Until 1917, Palestine was ruled by Ottoman Turkey. Jemal (Cemal) Pasha, a close associate of Enver Pasha in the Ottoman government, was Ottoman army commander in Syria and Palestine during World War I.

in the bloody events that followed in Palestine. The April pogrom in Jerusalem bears a deliberate political character.<sup>4</sup> It results from the furious agitation of the Arab effendis and the agents of "King" Faisal, a buffoon, acting on the orders of the British administration and "influencing" the urban mob with the help of British gold.

It must be stressed that after forty years of Jewish colonization under Turkish rule, this is the first time Palestine has witnessed

and support in the camp of the Jewish landowners, who are equally afraid of the Jewish worker. The Jewish kulak exploits the undemanding and submissive Arab poor as cheap wage slaves. This exploitation of the Arab poor by Jewish landowners imparts to class oppression a national form, thereby creating fertile ground for the chauvinist agitation of pan-Islamism.

Bourgeois Zionism in turn is a reliable ally of British imperialism's colonial policy in Palestine. Like pan-Islamism, bourgeois Zionism strives to utilize for its own class purposes the Jewish working masses' efforts toward liberation. Just like the bourgeoisie of every oppressed nation, the Zionist bourgeoisie, with its talk of national rebirth, seeks to seize out of the hands of the foreign bourgeoisie the monopoly it holds in the exploitation of the Jewish working masses.

The reactionary nature of Zionist politics became especially clear to the Jewish working masses recently with the intensification of the civil war [in Russia]. The Zionist bourgeoisie, who in the Soviet federation lost all their class privileges, were seized with terror before the impending triumph of the proletarian dictatorship in all of Eastern Europe. Worried about the fate of their ill-gotten gains, they are striving to create a sanctuary for themselves in Palestine. The Zionist bourgeoisie hail the British occupation of Palestine because they see in it a real force on which they can depend in the struggle with the Jewish working masses.

The settlement of Jewish working masses in Palestine is introducing into the country the Red specter of communism, which threatens both the Zionist bourgeoisie and the British imperialists and Arab feudalists. That is why the Zionist bourgeoisie is giving the occupation forces every form of help in hindering this immigration. Last year one of the leaders of the world Zionist organization, Dr. Weizmann, published a semi-official document on the necessity of restricting Jewish emigration to Palestine and subjecting this matter to the bourgeoisie's control. In this regard, Zionist policy in Palestine is blatantly reactionary. The language of the Jewish popular masses has been declared to have no standing. Funds collected from Jewish working people in various countries for the rebirth of Palestine are spent on subsidies for Jewish landowners and on improvements in the bourgeois quarters in Jaffa and other cities. Their economic policy has led to a staggering increase in unemployment and poverty among Jews. They have not hesitated even to create a White Guard base for themselves in the country in the form of special Jewish regions. The Zionist leaders are striving to transform Palestine into a country of exploitation and profiteering.

#### Palestine an arena of struggle

As a consequence of all this, it is evident that due to the World War, the efforts of Anglo-French imperialism, the alliance of the Arab effendis with the Jewish colonialists, and the reactionary policy of the Zionist bourgeoisie, Palestine has been transformed into an arena of imperialist, nationalist, civil, and religious struggle. Only a close alliance of the Jewish and Arab working masses can genuinely overcome these obstacles, liberate the country forever from these dark reactionary forces, and bring Palestine a new and free life.

The Jewish proletarian masses, who in the process of the socialist revolution have been compelled to rebuild their economy on new principles of labor, who are striving to settle and colonize Palest-



Humbert-Droz Archives, City Library, La Chaux-de-Fonds, Switzerland  
Opening rally of Congress of Peoples of the East in Baku, Azerbaijan, in 1920. Delegates debated many topics, including Zionism.

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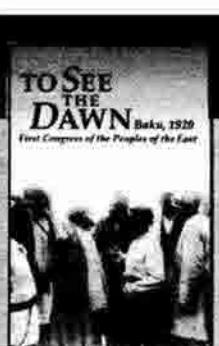
### TO SEE THE DAWN

BAKU, 1920—FIRST CONGRESS OF THE PEOPLES OF THE EAST  
How can peasants and workers in the colonial world achieve freedom from imperialist exploitation? How can working people overcome the divisions incited by their national ruling classes and act together for common class interests? These questions were addressed by 2,000 delegates to the Baku congress, representing more than two dozen peoples of Asia. They met at a time when the young workers' and peasants' republic in Russia gave hope of a new dawn for the world's toilers. Complete proceedings. Part of the series, *The Communist International* in Lenin's Time. 334 pp.

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tine on communist principles, decisively disassociate themselves from this adventure. They base themselves and their movement exclusively on their own revolutionary struggle in Palestine itself, hand in hand with the Arab working masses. They base it on the objective factors of world revolution and on the fraternal assistance of the international proletariat and its highest leading body, the Third, Communist International.

The Jewish proletariat has no other road. Only in the tireless struggle against world capital and in close unity with working people around the world will it achieve full realization of its ideas.

Down with the imperialists and their bourgeois stooges! Long live the fraternal unity of the oppressed and enslaved of the whole world!

Long live the general staff of the world proletarian struggle, the Third International!

\* \* \*

## The slogan of the Jewish proletariat must be "Hands off Palestine!"

### Declaration by Central Bureau of Jewish Sections, Communist Party of Russia

1. It is the policy of the Entente (and particularly Britain) regarding the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine, where the overwhelming majority of the population is Arab—a policy backed by the Yellow Second International—that provides the basis for the bourgeois Zionist party's agitation among the Jewish popular masses in favor of Zionism. Under the given conditions, this agitation favors the Entente, especially Britain.

2. Jews are being provocatively identified as initiators and culprits in the parcelling out of Arab lands among the victorious powers, including the handing over of Palestine to Britain. This identification serves British imperialism in Palestine and throughout the East as a means to ignite national passions among the working people of the East and to sow hatred between Arabs and Jews. This

5. First printed in *Kommunist* (Baku), September 8, 1920; published here courtesy of the Azerbaijan State Archives.

found expression in the three-day-long pogrom of Jews in Jerusalem in April this year, which enjoyed the open sympathy of the British occupying authorities.

3. The Entente's whole policy is a typical example of colonial domination. It finds striking expression in the "constitution" of Palestine adopted by the San Remo conference of the League of Nations. At the same time this policy endeavors to utilize the capital of the small and middle Jewish bourgeoisie of all countries and to hitch them to the chariot of British imperialism, "the herald of the peoples' liberation."

Under this constitution, the government in Palestine aims to include the Jewish capitalists (through the Zionist party) in the intensified exploitation of the Arab peasantry and to implicate them in this plunder. It aims to ignite a national dispute between Jewish and Arab cliques in the legislative bodies. By this it seeks to retard the awakening of the masses of the East.

#### Privileged Jewish minority

Britain's entire policy on Palestine aims at maintaining power wholly in the hands of the British occupiers and ideologically sub-

ordinating the Jewish community in all countries to Britain's interests. With the assistance of imperialism's Zionist servants, Britain's policy aims at drawing away from communism a portion of the Jewish proletariat by arousing in it national feelings and sympathies for Zionism. This policy of the Entente is actively supported by the Jewish bourgeoisie. In matters of exploitation and oppression, they solidarize fully with the capitalists of other nationalities. Their own class interests lead them to strive to participate in the plunder of the Arab peasant.

4. In the name of the Jewish proletariat and the working masses, we therefore most vigorously protest that, in the pretense of national liberation, a privileged Jewish minority is being artificially implanted in the population of Palestine. Such a policy is a direct violation of the rights of the Arab working masses in their struggle for independence and for complete possession of the land and of all the products of their labor.

#### For dictatorship of the proletariat

The slogan of the Jewish proletariat, and of every friend of the toiling masses and



British troops march through Jerusalem in 1929 in show of force against Palestinian population. Communists at Baku conference called on Jewish workers to reject Zionism and join worldwide struggle of all toilers for socialism.

every fighter for national liberation, must be "Hands off Palestine!"

We also sharply condemn the attempts by certain Jewish left-Socialist groups to combine communism with adherence to Zionist ideology. This is what we see in the program of the so-called Jewish Communist Party (Poale Zion). We believe that in the ranks of fighters for the rights and interests of the working people there is no place for groups that have in one form or another maintained Zionist ideology, concealing behind the mask of communism the nationalist appetites of the Jewish bourgeoisie. They are using communist slogans to exert bourgeois influence on the proletariat.

We note that during all the time that the mass Jewish workers' movement has existed, the Zionist ideology has been foreign to the Jewish proletariat. The social-Palestinian parties have been insignificant groups.<sup>6</sup> We declare that the Jewish masses envision the possibility of their social-economic and cultural development not in the creation of a "national center" in Palestine, but in the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the creation of socialist Soviet republics in the countries where they live. We call on the Jewish working masses of all countries to take part actively in the unfolding socialist revolution and to join the ranks of the Third International through the Communist parties of their respective countries.

A. Merezhin, delegate to the Congress of the Peoples of the East from the Central Bureau of the Jewish Section of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks)

This declaration was endorsed by delegates to the Congress of the Peoples of the East from:

1. The general assembly of working indigenous Jews of Tashkent;
2. The branch of indigenous Jews in the Tashkent organization of the Communist Party of Russia;
3. The Jewish branch of the Communist Union of Youth of Samarkand;
4. The Baku branch of the Communist Bund;
5. The Kuba branch of the Azerbaijan Communist Party;
6. The Mountain Jews branch of the Baku organization of the Communist Bund.

6. The term "social-Palestinian parties" refers here to Zionist organizations functioning within the Socialist and labor movements.

# New council in S. Africa is blow to apartheid

Continued from front page  
government files.

The TEC subcouncils overseeing the police and army would operate by 75 percent majorities. Others, such as those in charge of state finance and local government, would work by a two-thirds majority. It will take a vote by 75 percent of the TEC's members to veto a government action.

#### Council marks end of white minority rule

The formation of this transitional council effectively marks the end of 45 years of exclusive National Party rule. It is expected to begin operating at the end of October and will expire immediately after the election.

The Pan Africanist Congress and the right-wing Afrikaner-Volksunie abstained on the vote setting up the TEC. The Inkatha Freedom Party and the pro-apartheid Conservative Party did not vote. They have been boycotting the talks and insist they will not participate in the upcoming elections.

The white-minority Parliament is to convene September 13 to officially enact the TEC bill into law. The council will then be ratified at a plenary session attended by leaders of all the parties participating in the negotiations.

Conservative Party leader Ferdi Hartzenberg made clear September 3 that his organization is opposed to the formation of a multiparty Transitional Executive Council, saying his party would consider its existence

"a declaration of war."

Speaking to more than 10,000 people packed into a soccer stadium in the township of Kangwane two days later ANC president Nelson Mandela told a cheering crowd that the Conservative Party "has no capacity of stopping us."

"The Transitional Executive Council is going to be installed in this country," said Mandela. "The Conservative Party can start problems and have many more innocent people killed. But if [Hartzenberg] has any intelligence, if he has any vision, he must know the people of South Africa will crush the Conservative Party." The ANC leader added that he was willing to meet with Conservative Party leaders to "remove their fears of democracy."

#### Millions participate in peace day

Millions of South Africans participated in a national day of peace September 2 as part of a month-long campaign to counter political violence aimed at derailing South Africa's democratic election process.

Workers throughout the country, many wearing symbolic blue ribbons, formed human chains in city streets and observed a minute of silence at midday. In Johannesburg, South Africans brought the city to a standstill as they grasped the hand of the nearest passer-by to form multiracial human chains across road intersections.

"The overwhelming majority of South

Africans share the same desire," said Mandela in a statement released the day of the action. "They want to bring an immediate end to the murdering and maiming of innocent men, women and children. They want to see the birth of a free and democratic South Africa, and they want the transition to democracy to be a peaceful one."

The campaign, initiated by the independent National Peace Accord, was supported by all the major political groups in the country except the Conservative Party and neo-Nazi Afrikaner Resistance Movement.

Hundreds of Blacks have died in political violence in Johannesburg-area townships in recent weeks. On September 8, 21 Blacks were gunned down at a bus stop outside the city.

To launch the peace campaign in that area, residents of Katlehong and Tokosa staged a peace march as three members of the ANC and three from Inkatha set out on a 17-day "walk-for-peace" to the coastal city of Durban.

The ANC also called a one-day strike September 6 in these and Vosloorus, another Johannesburg-area township, to protest police brutality. Thousands of Blacks marched and rallied in Katlehong to demand the lifting of the state of emergency in the area, the ouster of white police from the townships, and legislation creating nonpartisan self-defense units.

"The actions are aimed at ending violence, to stop indiscriminate attacks on peo-

ple, [and] harassment meted out by police," stated regional ANC official Obed Baepha.

#### ANC steps up campaign efforts

Meanwhile, the ANC has been stepping up its election campaign efforts throughout the country. About 300 ANC volunteers began door-to-door canvassing August 28 in Soweto, South Africa's biggest Black township.

"We are beginning something we have never done before," said ANC election commission head Popo Molefe. "If we do it well we will bring in the government we have been waiting 81 years for."

"I have been waiting all my life for this to happen," stated factory worker Anna Katane as she welcomed ANC election workers to her living room for discussion.

"I will vote no matter what happens," Patricia Soko, another Black factory worker, told Reuters news service after a visit by ANC volunteers.

Mandela also reached out to white South Africans during a campaign visit September 3 to Nelspruit, a farming and industrial town 75 miles from the border with Mozambique in the eastern Transvaal region. "We are struggling to build a new country," stated Mandela as he urged white farmers and workers present to use their expertise to help "in the building of a new South Africa."

"I think it is fantastic that he is reaching out to the white community," local resident Oliver Ludwig told Reuters.

# 'Reject bosses' budget crisis framework'

BY GREG McCARTAN

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The socialist campaign of Emily Fitzsimmons for City Council chair is winning a wide hearing among workers and youth here. At a daily series of community meetings, media interviews, and candidate debates since mid-August, Fitzsimmons has presented a working-class alternative to the Democrats and Republicans.

Two dozen people have signed up for more information or to help on the socialist campaign. Many first heard Fitzsimmons on radio talk shows or at community-organized forums.

Weekly columns in the *Washington Post* are being passed around among members of the International Association of Machinists at United Airlines where Fitzsimmons works. In the columns, the five candidates certified for the ballot answer questions on housing, crime, education, massive reductions in the city work force, and what to do about the unfunded pension plan for city workers. Fitzsimmons's coworkers have donated \$150 to the campaign.

The socialist campaign is also being covered by the *Community News*, the *Afro-American*, *El Pregonero*, and the *City Paper*. Radio interviews range from several-minute spots to hour-long interviews on some of the most popular call-in talk shows. Fitzsimmons's campaign has also been covered by each of the major TV stations and the local cable channels.

Aside from Fitzsimmons, four Democrats are contesting the seat in the special election scheduled for September 14. Each says the central issue in the campaign is the city's "budget crisis," and calls for further measures to insure "fiscal responsibility" through firing city workers, program cutbacks, and privatization of a range of services.

The city government cut 3,000 jobs this past spring and has plans to eliminate 1,700 more positions. Funds for medical care, recreation centers, mental-health services, shelter for the homeless, and education have

been put on the chopping block.

Fitzsimmons opposes the cutbacks in social programs and says working people should reject the whole notion that they should worry about the bosses' concerns over balancing the budget.

After reading Fitzsimmons's answers on the budget and other issues, one of her coworkers said she was "too vague" and didn't propose specific solutions.

The socialist candidate replied that "working people always have to struggle to get out of the framework set by the employers, like the so-called fiscal crisis. Our framework has to be how to defend the interests of our class."

Another coworker joined the discussion,

saying she particularly liked Fitzsimmons's proposals on the housing crisis.

The socialist candidate proposes combatting the housing crisis by opening thousands of vacant units to the homeless, providing massive funds to build adequate housing for working people, and limiting rent to no more than 10 percent of a tenant's income. In response to soaring unemployment she calls for shortening the workweek to 30 hours with no pay reduction.

"How will all this be paid for?" a woman asked her from the floor during a candidates' forum sponsored by Common Cause and Democratic Socialists of America.

Fitzsimmons replied, "The civil rights

fighters in Birmingham, [Alabama], in the 1960s didn't stop their struggles to ask where the money was going to come from," noting that civil rights gains took some profits out of bosses' pockets. "This is the wealthiest country in the world and a minority controls billions of dollars. It's only through strengthening the working class that I believe we have a chance to advance."

A man who works at a center for homeless workers called the Socialist Workers campaign office offering to help and then went to hear Fitzsimmons at one of the candidates' meetings. He suggested the socialist campaign propose fighting to equalize the obscenely high salaries of corporate executives and those of working people.

Fitzsimmons agreed with him that there are huge income disparities in this society. "But we're not going to convince CEOs to lower their salaries," she said. "The capitalist profit system certainly won't provide for working people. The labor movement must fight to raise the wages of working people, beginning with the most oppressed."

## Labor Day rallies back miners' fight

Continued from front page

Virginia events expressed determination to turn back increasingly open company moves to restart coal production.

In late August, a couple hundred miners on strike at Consolidated Coal's Tygart River mine in Shinnston, West Virginia, organized to block company trucks that were bringing supplies into the mines.

Miners and their supporters at the Camp Muffly demonstration responded most enthusiastically when UMWA vice-president Cecil Roberts called for action and explained how it is the coal bosses who respond with violence in the face of miners' efforts to stand up for their union and jobs. "Hundreds of thousands have lost their lives in the mines," Roberts said. "We will meet their violence with acts of nonviolent civil resistance."

Other Labor Day weekend solidarity events included a rally of a thousand in Danville, West Virginia, and a similar number in Oakwood, Virginia. Three hundred workers attended a Labor Day picnic in Bristol, Virginia, on September 6. The picnic was organized by the UMWA Freedom Fighters, a group supporting the miners.

Estelle DeBates from Morgantown, West Virginia, and Marty Boyers from Greensboro, North Carolina, contributed to this article.

## California unionists join fight against gov't harassment of socialist worker

BY OSBORNE HART

BERKELEY, California—Coworkers and supporters of Milton Chee, a unionist and Socialist Workers Party member who is being harassed by the government, raised more than \$1,700 for his legal expenses at a fund-raising barbecue September 5.

Chee, an aircraft sheet metal mechanic and member of International Association of Machinists Local 1584 at Alameda Naval Aviation Depot, ran for San Francisco Board of Supervisors during the 1992 nonpartisan elections. Because Chee's candidacy was endorsed by the Socialist Workers Campaign Committee, he is under federal investigation for alleged violations of the Hatch Act. This antidemocratic law restricts political rights and activities of federal workers. Chee is waging a public fight against this victimization.

Jim Burfiend, also a Naval Aviation Depot worker and IAM Local 1584 member, hosted the event and welcomed the more than 40 people attending.

Among those gathered were current and retired members of Local 1584, officials of the union, and members of several other unions from the San Francisco Bay Area.

Joan Radin, a volunteer coordinating support for Chee, presented a brief update on the status of the government's investigation and thanked everyone for their support.

IAM Local 1584 treasurer Marge Kolb invited everyone to attend a September 16 meeting for striking coal miners sponsored by the union.

The fund-raising event was featured in an article titled, "Friends raise funds for Socialist Navy employee" in the September 7-9 *Alameda Journal*.

## Corrections

Two errors appeared in the September 6 issue of the *Militant*.

The article "Black farmers meet, discuss fight against massive loss of land," which appeared on page 6, incorrectly said that U.S. secretary of agriculture Mike Espy had reported that all farm foreclosures not currently in litigation had been suspended. The article should have said that Espy reported that all farm foreclosures not up for litigation will be reviewed.

On page 11, the article "Judge and cops exercise bias in L.A. trial" stated that "Denny was saved by four workers who are Black, who chased the gang members away from the scene...." The sentence should have read, "Denny was saved by four workers who are Black, who chased the perpetrators away from the scene."



Emily Fitzsimmons, socialist candidate for Washington, D.C., city council chair, demands massive funding to build new housing for working people. Above: protesters at 1991 Solidarity Day rally.

## Striking miners cheered at N.Y. labor parade

BY DIANA CANTU

NEW YORK—Striking members of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) received an enthusiastic welcome at New York's annual Labor Day parade down Fifth Avenue September 6. Tens of thousands of unionists took part in the annual observance. Dozens of local contingents participated, including striking Alitalia Airlines workers; city teachers, who have just ended a bitter two-year contract struggle; Broadway musicians preparing to strike; and supporters of the United Farm Workers grape boycott.

Eleven striking coal miners from UMWA Local 1980 at the Dillworth mine in Crucible, Pennsylvania, traveled to New York for the event at the invitation of Jobs With Justice. The miners started the day at a labor breakfast hosted by the Central

Labor Council, where UMWA District One director Paul Lemon spoke. They were welcomed to the city by Jesse Jackson and mayor David Dinkins.

The miners were invited to join the parade as part of the Transport Workers Union of America Local 100 contingent. They also set up a table, distributed thousands of leaflets, and sold dozens of hats and T-shirts. All along the route they were cheered by spectators and at the reviewing stand they received loud applause. A big banner read "New York labor supports striking mine workers."

The parade led off with a contingent of labor officials and politicians, many of whom are campaigning in New York City's hotly contested mayoral race. Several of these individuals including Gov. Mario Cuomo, Din-



Socialist candidate Mary Nell Bockman supports striking miners at New York parade

# Airline workers fight company takebacks

BY ELIZABETH STONE

NEW YORK — Cargo handlers and ticket, passenger, and reservations agents at Alitalia Airlines went on strike September 5 in response to a brutal company assault.

On September 2, Alitalia broke off negotiations with the 308 workers who are represented by the International Association of Machinists (IAM) in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, and other cities.

The company then moved to impose its final offer, which included 40 percent pay cuts for all IAM workers except reservations agents, whose pay was frozen. Medical payments of \$500 a year for single people and up to \$2,200 for family coverage were also introduced.

In New York, where 150 members of IAM locals 2656 and 1894 are on strike, the company locked out all its IAM employees at Kennedy Airport. Before the strike vote was taken a guard was posted at the door of the cargo building with a list of IAM workers who were refused entry as they came to work.

The company moved quickly to contract

out work done by the strikers to Dyne Air, which pays most of its workers from \$6 to \$7 an hour. Dyne Air workers are members of the Transport Workers Union of America.

"The company gave us no choice," Grover Walraven, a passenger service agent with 23 years at Alitalia explained. "We were ready to make some concessions, but we couldn't accept a 40 percent cut."

Walraven said the new contract included a "farming out" clause requiring workers to agree that their jobs could be contracted out at any time. The company also demanded the right to hire unlimited seasonal help, who would be nonunion with no benefits or recall rights.

Part-time workers at Kennedy have been fired by Alitalia and given the option to reapply for work with Dyne Air.

The strikers had a chance to build support for their strike when the Labor Day march of 50,000 passed by the Alitalia picket line on Fifth Avenue in New York. Chants of "Boycott Alitalia" echoed up and down the avenue as thousands of workers in union contingents took up the chants of the strikers.



Militant/Elizabeth Stone

Workers on strike against Alitalia Airlines picket in New York

day at Kennedy Airport and at the Alitalia headquarters at 666 Fifth Avenue.

Elizabeth Stone works at United Airlines at LaGuardia Airport in New York and is a member of IAM Local 1892.

## Accepting auto bosses' demands won't save jobs

BY KIBWE DIARRA AND PETER THIERJUNG

CLEVELAND — The concessions that the Big Three U.S. automakers — Ford Motor Co., Chrysler Corp., and General Motors (GM) — are demanding follow on the heels of more than a decade of takebacks in the auto industry.

Contracts between the auto companies and the United Auto Workers (UAW) and Canadian Auto Workers (CAW) unions expire at midnight September 14.

UAW officials announced August 30 they had targeted Ford to achieve a pattern-setting contract that would then be used as the basic agreement in negotiations with the other two companies. Some 96,000 UAW members work for Ford.

On September 1 UAW members at Ford voted by a 95 percent margin to authorize a strike if necessary.

Ford wants employees hired after the contract is ratified to bear the brunt of any takebacks. The company is demanding that the starting pay of new hires be cut to 60 percent, instead of the current 85 percent, with a provision that it take six years, not the current 18 months, to reach full pay. Ford also wants substantial health and benefit concessions to be shouldered by new hires.

A September 6 article in the *New York Times* points to health benefits as the pivotal issue in the negotiations. Auto workers strongly oppose company demands to eliminate eye, hearing, and dental care; to charge workers 20 percent of the cost of insurance; and to introduce annual deductibles. "We fought too damn hard for health care," Andy Torok told the *Times*. Torok, who has worked for GM for 17 years, is suffering from multiple sclerosis.

UAW international president Owen Bieber has opposed any concessions for current employees on health and benefits, but according to the *New York Times* he holds open the possibility of compromise on wages and benefits for new hires.

Chrysler has demanded a similar package to Ford, but wants the takebacks in health and benefits to extend to current employees.

GM has thus far refused to put any proposals on the negotiating table. Company officials have said they have no intention of following any pattern set in negotiations with Ford. GM is currently "downsizing," with plans to close 21 plants and cut some 74,000 union and nonunion jobs.

All three U.S. automakers posted profits for the first quarter of 1993. Ford fared best among the three, claiming a \$572 million

profit; Chrysler reported a \$530 million profit; and GM, \$513 million. GM's North American operations, however, reported a substantial loss for the same period.

In spite of these figures, all three automakers are feeling the impact of the weak economic recovery and the fierce competition with each other and manufacturers in Asia and Europe. According to the *Detroit Free Press*, the Big Three lost about \$9.5 billion between 1990–92.

In an April 24 article assessing prospects for the auto industry, the *Free Press* argues for concessions from the UAW and says the union must hitch its fortunes to those of the U.S. auto bosses.

"The UAW must calculate how every line of the phone book-size contract can help the Big Three beat back anti-union Japanese carmakers and suppliers that have cost it so many jobs," states the *Free Press*. "It must use the contract to ensure GM's survival, while helping Ford and Chrysler capture enough of GM's lost sales to become the new leaders of the U.S. industry."

### An era of concessions

But the current round of bargaining comes on top of almost a decade and a half of concession contracts approved by the

UAW on the promise of winning job security. The results, however, have only emboldened the automakers in their offensive.

Between 1978 and 1993 UAW membership fell from 1.5 million to 750,000 due to layoffs and "downsizing" by the Big Three.

Automakers have successfully been able to get fewer workers to work harder and longer hours per week.

Brutal line speedup, job combinations, and massive overtime have all been used by the automakers, often under the guise of labor-management cooperation and "team concept" schemes. According to the UAW's *Solidarity* magazine, if a 40-hour workweek had been adhered to in 1991, some 59,000 jobs would have been saved.

The introduction of a two-tier wage scale for new hires has caused resentment among younger workers and deepened divisions in the union.

Two-thirds of workers at independent parts plants were unionized in 1976 and their income averaged 78 percent of workers employed by the Big Three. Today only one in five workers belongs to the union and those workers earn half of what Big Three assembly workers are paid.

The years of concessions have taken their toll. When GM recently announced plans for massive layoffs and plant shutdowns, several individual UAW locals scrambled to compete against each other over who would give up the most to get the remaining jobs.

The August 1992 strike by 2,400 members of UAW Local 1714 at the GM assembly plant in Lordstown, Ohio, showed a different approach to the bosses' demands. The strike shut down production at nine other assembly plants and idled some 45,000 workers, causing the company losses of more than \$40 million. It forced GM to live up to agreements previously reached with the union on job security, outsourcing, and health and safety issues.

Kibwe Diarra is a member of UAW Local 2000 in Avon Lake, Ohio, and Peter Thierjung is a member of Local 538 in Cleveland.

## Canadian auto workers face contract fight

BY GARY WATSON

TORONTO, Ontario — The Canadian Autoworkers (CAW) announced here September 2 that Chrysler Canada would be targeted for strike action if a negotiated settlement is not reached by September 14.

The negotiations with Chrysler Corp., Ford Motor Co., and General Motors in Canada cover 49,000 CAW members. In a series of meetings during the last two weeks of August, more than 95 percent of union members gave negotiators a strike mandate.

These talks are taking place as a massive restructuring of the industry leads to thousands of job cuts.

Between 1989 and the end of 1991, 24,000 auto jobs were eliminated in Canada. In May of this year General Motors (GM) closed its Scarborough, Ontario, van plant, permanently axing 3,000 workers. By the end of 1995 at least 2,300 workers will be cut by GM in St. Catherine's, Ontario. Re-tooling later this year will allow current production levels to be maintained but with 600 fewer jobs at the Windsor, Ontario, transmission plant, and 1,400 fewer jobs at two Oshawa, Ontario, auto plants.

Union officials argue that these productivity improvements, as well as a \$9-per-hour cost advantage over U.S. production plants, should result in gains at the bargaining table.

While GM lost \$13 billion worldwide in its automotive operations during the life of the 1990–1993 contract, it made more

than \$300 million in the same period in Canada.

Union officials are calling for more paid time off, less overtime, major early retirement gains, and the addition of third shifts at some plants. They are also seeking a wage increase.

CAW president Basil Hargrove vowed that the union aims to "get rid of this mentality of cutbacks and freezes and rollbacks."

David Kempken, Chrysler's vice-president of human resources, claims the com-

pany is not asking for concessions but is seeking a contract "recognizing the realities of the marketplace."

Approximately 10,500 CAW members work at Chrysler facilities in Ontario and Quebec.

As of September 5, neither union negotiators nor company representatives have reported details of company demands to CAW members.

Gary Watson is a member of CAW Local 1285 in Bramalea, Ontario.

## Jew-hatred in classroom is not free speech

Continued from Page 14

tual superiority. These views not only help deepen divisions among the working class, they are also factually wrong.

Similar arguments have been used for several hundred years to justify discrimination against Blacks. As recently as the mid-1970s William Shockley, a Nobel Prize-winning physicist, argued that Blacks were genetically inferior to whites. Shockley claimed to base his conclusions on IQ tests. Other pseudoscientists have used statistics of everything from brain size to the length of the lower arm to "prove" that skin color determines intelligence, "humanity," or some other human quality. In every case, careful and objective

scientific study has debunked these "theories" as the racist frauds they are.

Jeffries's counterposing of a "humanistic" Africa to an "egotistical" Europe also doesn't help working people or youth to gain a clear understanding of history and to chart a course forward.

While it is certainly true that capitalism — in both its colonial and imperialist versions — has devastated much of the world, Jeffries's view that Africa before the advent of colonialism was a society untouched by slavery or inequality is not true.

And while Europe was the birthplace of the capitalist class — the most ruthless and murderous class in human history — it is

also the birthplace of the modern working class and the communist movement, the only class that is capable of putting an end to racism, sexism, and exploitation.

It is to this international working-class movement that revolutionary fighters — regardless of skin color or nation of birth — will increasingly look. Young fighters who want to see an example of this kind of world-class leadership should pick up a copy of *Thomas Sankara Speaks*, a book of speeches by the revolutionary leader from Burkina Faso, or the forthcoming edition of *Nelson Mandela Speaks: Forging a Democratic, Nonracial South Africa*. Both books are published by Pathfinder Press.

# Four hundred attend civil rights meeting

BY SAM MANUEL

ROCKVILLE, Maryland — Some 400 people attended the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) convention held here August 24–28. The conference took place on the eve of the August 28 march on Washington, commemorating the 30th anniversary of the 1963 civil rights demonstration, which SCLC helped lead.

Most participants have been longtime activists in the fight for civil rights. But some came for the first time, representing new chapters of the organization.

A central theme throughout the convention was disappointed expectations in the Clinton administration.

"Even though we have a Democratic president and congress, the gridlock on legislation we need has not ended," lamented SCLC president Joseph Lowery in an opening address to the convention.

The gathering included several small protest actions: for statehood for the District of Columbia, against discriminatory public transportation service, and an anti-handgun picket directed against the National Rifle Association.

NAACP executive director Ben Chavis was a featured speaker at one luncheon.

Opposition to the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) was presented as a key part of the fight for jobs. Lowery and other convention speakers argued that the agreement would cause U.S. companies to leave this country in search of cheap labor provided by Mexican workers.

"The jobs would go south, not our South, but their south, south of the border," Lowery said. He called upon the administration to make the demand to upgrade the wages and working conditions of Mexican workers a precondition for support to the agreement.

A special debate on NAFTA was held as part of the convention featuring politicians Jesse Jackson and Ross Perot.

Lowery stressed the need for other measures such as job retraining, expanded loans to small businesses, and stepped up affirmative action to hire Blacks and women into executive positions.

"We must stop intervening militarily around the world," the SCLC president said.

"We have a difference with Iraq, or Somalia, or somewhere in South America and we try to overthrow them — we are teaching that differences are settled through violence," he added. He called for a "new application of technology for peace and jobs."

Lowery also reiterated the organization's support for equality for women and gays. "Gays have always been in the military, just as they have been in the Black church. The issue is that no one must be denied equal and human rights because of their sexual orientation," Lowery stated.

Lani Guinier and Joycelyn Elders received standing ovations as they were presented awards at the women's luncheon hosted by the convention. The Clinton administration withdrew its nomination of Guinier for assistant attorney general for civil rights after several congressmen expressed opposition to her views on affirmative action and voting rights. Elders, who was confirmed as surgeon general September 7, faced opposition due to her support of sex education in schools and abortion rights.

tion rights.

Lowery's address took place in the First Korean Baptist Church and was attended by many of its members. While calling for "responsible" conduct on the part of Korean businesses, he disassociated SCLC from those who have organized protests against Korean store owners in the Black community. "We who have fought to move into other neighborhoods should be the last to tell people they can't come into ours," he said.

## Drugs, violence, and criminal justice

Several panels were devoted to a discussion of drugs, violence, and the criminal justice system. Lowery criticized provisions in the administration's "anti-crime" bill that would strengthen use of the death penalty and weaken prisoners' rights of appeals.

"We remain unalterably opposed to the death penalty on moral grounds," Lowery reiterated. "Now they want to also reduce the amount of time a prisoner has to introduce new evidence," he said. "Who would

be hurt by this other than Black and poor prisoners who can't afford skilled attorneys or private investigators."

A lively discussion ensued following a presentation by the administration's drug czar, former New York police chief Lee Brown. While most participants agreed with Brown that drug abuse is of central concern in the Black community, many expressed skepticism that the police were interested in halting it. "Everyone points to the drug pushers on the corner but we know them, and we know they don't have the means to get drugs from South America or Asia into the country," shouted on delegate from Indiana.

The only workshop on youth at the conference was entitled, "Youth, Gangs, Drugs, Sex and Violence." Many young people there did not feel it dealt with issues they are concerned about. At the end of the convention a youth representative announced that a steering committee for SCLC youth had been established and that it would plan next year's youth activity.

# Bakery workers strike in Ireland

BY JOYCE FAIRCHILD  
AND TONY HUNT

DUBLIN, Ireland — "People are getting fed up with the way the bosses are treating us and the pittance they are paying," stated a sacked (discharged) worker fighting here for union recognition at Pat the Baker. The workers are seeking to be represented by the Services Industrial Professional Technical Union (SIPTU). Last March 28 the company fired 15 workers who went on strike. They were protesting low basic wages, no shift allowance, no extra pay for working public holidays, and no sick pay or pension plan. Pat the Baker — one of the biggest bakeries in Ireland — at first offered more money, "but still wouldn't agree to union recognition, so we said no," stated one of the workers. The company brought in video cameras to spy on the pickets and moved production out of Dublin to another plant.

The night before the *Militant* visited the picket line, the striker's caravan (trailer) was attacked and a window smashed. A banner and placards had been ripped down and removed. This intimidation, however, failed to dampen spirits.

A consumer boycott campaign of Pat the Baker's products appears to be having some effect, strikers reported. "They've had a lot of waste returned," one picket said. "People aren't buying their bread, that's why this has happened," he added, pointing to the damaged caravan.

## Workers face deteriorating conditions

The battle at Pat the Baker and others elsewhere in Ireland occur as conditions facing working people continue to worsen. The capitalist ruling families in the Irish Republic, reeling from an economic crisis, are sharpening their attacks on workers and working farmers. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development reported recently that the unemployment rate in the Republic of Ireland is 19.5 percent. Out of a population of approximately 3.5 million an estimated 814,000 people in Ireland depend on "social welfare" payments.

At Nolan Transport in Waterford, south of Dublin, six drivers have been on strike since February, following the firing of two workers for trying to organize a union. The long distance drivers at Nolan earn IR£2.00–2.50 per hour (US\$3.00–3.75) with no sick pay, overtime rates, or meal allowances. The SIPTU paper *Newsline* reports that picketers have been attacked "with iron bars, wooden staves

and even a hammer." Dock workers in Dublin, Cork, and Dun Laoghaire have decided to refuse port facilities to trucks from Nolan Transport. This is an unofficial action by the workers since "secondary" actions organized by the unions were made illegal under the antiunion Industrial Relations Act of 1990.

Big attacks are also planned at Aer Lingus, the government-owned airline. On July 15, the company distributed copies of a "recovery plan" to individual workers. The plan calls for major concessions including up to 1,500 job losses, cuts in overtime rates and shift payments, greater use of temporary and part-time staff, and a complete pay freeze until the end of 1995. On July 17, 1,300 workers halted production for two hours to protest the plan.

Joyce Fairchild is a member of the Transport and General Workers Union at Catterick, Heathrow Airport, London. Tony Hunt is a member of the Bakery Food and Allied Workers Union in Sheffield, England. Fairchild and Hunt recently returned from a *Militant* reporting trip to Ireland.

This is the first of a series of articles from a *Militant* sales and reporting team to Ireland. Sending this team cost *Militant* supporters in Britain £1,200 (U.S.\$1,800). To help with the cost of the trip, please send donations to *Militant* Distribution, 47 The Cut, London, England SE1 8LL.

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**The Socialist Alternative to War, Racism, and Economic Crisis.** Speakers: Laura Garza, Socialist Workers candidate for mayor of Miami; Seth Galinsky and Maggie McCraw, Socialist Workers candidates for City Commission. Sat., Sept. 18, 7:30 p.m. 137 NE 54th St. Donation: \$3. Tel: (305) 756-1020.

### MINNESOTA

#### St. Paul

**Speak-out to Protest "Stalking" Charges against Pro-Choice Activists.** Speakers: Lisa Strong, Jennifer Leazer, Andrea Jackman, and other pro-choice activists charged with "stalking" an Operation Rescue caravan. Sat., Sept. 18, 7:30 p.m. 508 N. Snelling Ave. Donation: \$3; students and unemployed \$1. Tel: (612) 644-6325.

### PENNSYLVANIA

#### Philadelphia

**Report from "Eating with the Enemy Tour: Cuba's Fight for Self-Sufficiency.** Slide show by tour participants Robin Larsen and Ben Larsen. Sat., Sept. 18, 7:30 p.m. 1906 South St. Donation \$3. Tel: (215) 546-8218.

### WASHINGTON

#### Seattle

**Socialist Campaign Rally.** Speaker: Chris Hoeppner, Socialist Workers candidate for mayor of Seattle, recently returned from Cuba after participating in the Friendship caravan. Sat., Sept. 18, 7:30 p.m. 1405 E. Madison. Donation: \$3. Tel: (206) 323-1755.

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### BRITAIN

#### London

**From Pat's Bakery to 'The Troubles': How Workers in Ireland See the Country's Crisis. Firsthand Report from Trade Unionists' Tour.** Speakers: Sheila Kennedy and Tony Hunt, Sat., Sept. 18, 6 p.m. 47 The Cut, SE 1. Donation: £2. Tel: 71-401-2409.

#### Manchester

**Palestine Liberation Fight. What is the Meaning of the Draft Agreement with Israel?** Speak-

ers: representative, Palestine Liberation Organization; Debbie DeLange, member, Rail Maritime & Transport Union, and Communist League. Sat., Sept. 18, 6 p.m. 1st Floor, 60 Shudehill. Donation: £1. Tel: 061-839 1766.

### NEW ZEALAND

#### Christchurch

**Panel against Education Budget Cuts.** Sat., Sept. 18, 7 p.m. 199 High St. Donation: \$3. Tel: (3) 365-6055.

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### ICELAND

**Reykjavik**

Justice, USA — In Thomaston, Georgia, a teenager with no prior record was given three years in jail



Harry  
Ring

for assertedly breaking into a school and eating some cafeteria ice cream bars. The D.A. said the sentence was justified because Dehundra Caldwell probably intended to steal more than ice cream.

**Heavy duty** — A robot assigned

to pick up a pipe bomb found in a police raid went berserk and started bouncing off the walls. "It was spinning around, just going wild," a cop said. "People were yelling, 'Shut it off!' So we pulled the plug." It happened in San Francisco, not Somalia, and the robot's name was Snoopy, not Bill.

**Imagine that** — When federal regulations allegedly designed to reduce rip-off cable TV rates went into effect September 1, at least a third of subscribers were hit with increases. (In Los Angeles, the cheapest rate jumped \$6.95 a month.) "When we said two-thirds . . . of cable subscribers would get rate decreases, we never imagined that the rest would

get increases." — Rep. Edward Markey, an author of the new rate law.

**They finally provided a home** — In Clay, West Virginia, a woman who reportedly sold her one-month-old infant for \$1,400 so she could buy a trailer was sentenced to a year in prison.

**Hypeconscious** — U.S. ad agencies functioning in the former Soviet bloc point to a survey in which 89 percent of respondents found the ad information useful, albeit nearly half believed the ads were misleading. "From years of exposure to propaganda," one adman explained, "people have a certain mechanism that allows them to

watch ads and not be persuaded."

**Keep it pointless** — "I'm against funding for gay art. I don't think plays and things that try to get a point across are art." — A resident of Cobb County, near Atlanta, where it was decided to bar funding for art that fails to meet "community standards."

**Sense of humor?** — There are some 10,000 homeless in San Francisco and emergency shelters for 1,500 of them. But now something is being done. The cops are busting the homeless wholesale. The operation is called the Quality of Life Enforcement Program.

**No petty larceny** — An account-

ing firm billed taxpayers \$11 million for \$1 million worth of clerical work and other chores related to the federal burial of Homefed, a busted San Diego thrift. Earlier it was disclosed that the government was paying another accounting house 67 cents a page for xeroxing Homefed records. Meanwhile, the government says it's barred Homefed execs from walking off with self-awarded \$18 million severance packages.

**Free-marketeers** — British Airways (BA) settled out of court with Virgin Atlantic Airways. BA had been hacking into Virgin's computers for lists of first-class passengers and then working to lure them into switching reservations.

## Independence forces debate Puerto Rico plebiscite

BY RON RICHARDS

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico — For the first time since 1967, voters in this U.S. colony will cast ballots November 14 in a nonbinding plebiscite on the status of Puerto Rico. A debate is taking place in the independence movement over how to respond to this initiative by the New Progressive Party, which advocates U.S. statehood for Puerto Rico.

Gov. Pedro Rosselló, who won the election in November 1992 with nearly 50 percent of the vote, fulfilled a campaign promise and July 4 signed the legislation calling for the plebiscite. The three alternatives on the ballot will be statehood, independence, and some form of the status quo with modifications. The U.S. Congress has given no indication that it will honor the outcome of the vote.

The present government of Puerto Rico is called a commonwealth in English and Estado Libre Asociado (Free Associated State) in Spanish. In reality it is a colony of the United States. Residents of Puerto Rico are U.S. citizens by birth but cannot vote for president or Congress and are subject to the military draft. Key areas like immigration and economic policy are directly controlled by Washington.

The United States government maintains military bases rent-free on the island, without Puerto Ricans having any say in the decision. The local government has considerable autonomy over areas like education, health, and utilities.

### Independence movement split over tactics

In the next few months tens of thousands of supporters of independence will be mobilized, but in different directions. The Puerto Rican Independence Party (PIP) is the largest pro-independence organization on the island. It is in favor of participation in the plebiscite and plans to hold, between now and the voting, 7,000 activities in all 76 towns in Puerto Rico. The final rally of the PIP in the 1992 election campaign drew 20,000 people.

The PIP boycotted the last plebiscite in 1967. Party president Rubén Berrioz Martínez explained the different positions between now and then.

"That plebiscite was held to legitimize the island's colonial situation," Berrioz said. "But this plebiscite will help destabilize the colony."

PIP leaders say the U.S. government will reject statehood and begin to consider independence more seriously. The party is trying to convince the rulers of the United States that, should the island become independent, it will do a good job of protecting U.S. interests in the region. In 1989, when the U.S. Congress was discussing a proposed plebiscite, Berrioz testified before a Senate committee that the PIP was willing to negotiate a treaty allowing the U.S. military to keep its bases here after the island received independence.

With the exception of the PIP, virtually all the pro-independence forces are opposed to participation in the plebiscite. The only widely-read newspaper that supports independence is *Claridad*, the weekly organ of the Puerto Rican Socialist Party (PSP), which has campaigned against participation of the independence movement in this vote.

The PSP is currently undergoing a transformation and reorganization. In the next few months, party leaders are proposing the group be dissolved as a party and reconstituted as the New Independence Movement, which is already accepting members. These changes will not affect its position against

the plebiscite or the importance of *Claridad* as the voice of independence.

On June 18 Carlos Gallisá, general secretary of the PSP, testified before a legislative committee that was considering the plebiscite bill. His statement, which called for voters to abstain from the vote, was printed in *Claridad*.

"For the independence movement, taking part in this plebiscite means retreating from positions and principles that the movement has defended for years, both nationally and internationally," Gallisá said. "We will never understand and much less support, as a strategy for the independence movement, any move that promotes the statehood process under the assumption that statehood will be denied by the United States. This position taken by the PIP is like playing Russian roulette."

### Hostos conferences

Important meetings of the independence movement include the Hostos conferences; the second of these, held August 1 in Cayey, passed a resolution rejecting the plebiscite. The first conference, attended by 2,000 people, was called by Juan Mari Brás and held in Mayagüez in January 1993. *Independentistas* of all different ideologies were welcome to speak and participate. The conference occurred just as Rosselló was taking office and was a forum for independence activists to discuss the significance of the coming to power of a pro-statehood administration for the first time in eight years.

Juan Mari Brás is one of the best known leaders of the independence movement. He has been active for almost 50 years. He was a founder of the PSP although he has not been a member for several years. At the January conference Mari Brás said that he now believes that it was a mistake in 1971 to form the PSP from its predecessor organization, the Pro-Independence Movement.

The conference is named for Eugenio María de Hostos, a 19th century fighter for the independence of the island from Spanish rule.

The first Hostos conference elected a commission, which has held dozens of public hearings throughout the island and in many U.S. cities with large Puerto Rican populations. At these meetings anybody could present their opinions on what the independence movement should do.

The debate over the plebiscite and the reorganization of the PSP are aspects of a broader debate that is taking place here. The central question is what should be the form and program of the independence movement.

Since the breakup of the Soviet Union, many groups that called themselves socialist or communist, or advocated building a mass independence movement with a working-class, rather than bourgeois, leadership, have abandoned any reference to socialism and have begun to promote bourgeois nationalist ideas.

In the plebiscite process two things are clear: the number of votes received by the independence option will not reflect the number of people who support independence for this U.S. colony and the debate about the future of the independence movement will not end with the vote in November.

Ron Richards is a member of the American Federation of Government Employees in San Juan. Loida Martínez contributed to this article.



Militant/Ron Richards  
Pro-independence rally in San Juan, capital of Puerto Rico, in June 1989. Washington holds Puerto Rico as one of the world's last remaining colonies.

## —25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—

### THE MILITANT

Published in the Interest of the Working People  
September 20, 1968

in a dispatch from Birmingham, Ala. last month. Year after year fresh victims are added to the unending list of mine casualties. Accounts of these accidents differ only in the number of dead and disabled miners.

The deaths and injuries in the mining industry since Pearl Harbor exceed all casualties in the military forces of the United States for the same period, a recent government report admitted. Every day of their lives miners display valor as great as that of soldiers on the fighting fronts. But miners get no medals for their hard and hazardous work. Neither do they get the necessary safeguards to protect them from ever-present danger.

For the destitute family of a dead miner, to whom no amount of money can compensate for the loss of their loved one, the profit-swollen bosses pay the sum of \$250. Even this paltry sum was only recently raised from \$150 through the efforts of the United Mine Workers.

Despite the already dangerous conditions existing in the mines, the greedy bosses keep urging a longer work-day, a longer work-week, greater speed in operations. To September 4 of this year, bituminous coal output reached about 397,442,000 tons, a gain of 6,615,000 tons compared with the 390,827,000 tons for the same 1942 period. There's a lot of profit for the bosses in these additional millions of tons of coal, but their hunger for profits can never be satisfied.

A few days ago Harry M. Vawter, director of the Bituminous Coal Institute, and hireling of the mine bosses, declared that one extra day's work a week for six weeks would produce 12,000,000 more tons! He fails, of course, to point out the appalling list of dead and crippled miners that, under present conditions of callous indifference to safety, would certainly result from such a tremendous speedup.

### THE MILITANT

PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

NEW YORK, N.Y. FIVE 15¢ CENTS

September 18, 1943

"19 Killed, 26 Injured in Two Blasts in Mine," announced the newspaper headlines

## Step forward for Palestinians

The agreement for Palestinian self-rule in the Gaza Strip and Jericho marks a step forward in the decades-long struggle of the Palestinian people against colonial oppression. Over the last 80 years, the Palestinians have faced repeated assaults — they have been driven off their land, faced an army of occupation, suffered bloody repression, and been subjected to arbitrary deportations and arrests. Now occupying troops will be withdrawn from a portion of the land seized by the Israeli regime, giving revolutionary workers and youth more space to advance their struggle. This is something Tel Aviv had sworn it would never do.

Despite overwhelming military might and the backing of the imperialist powers of the world, the Israeli government has failed for 45 years to crush the struggle of a people dispersed in refugee camps and countries around the world. The fact that Israel now has to partially withdraw from some of the occupied territories, leaving open what further steps can be taken in the coming months and years, is a tribute to the tenacity and irrepressibility of the Palestinian people in their fight for justice.

Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin's willingness to negotiate with the PLO and sign the accords reflects the increasing tensions in Israel, which has been hard hit by the world capitalist depression. Unemployment, for instance, now stands at more than 11 percent. Tel Aviv also suffered a political setback following the U.S.-led war against Iraq. Washington has been establishing

stronger ties with the capitalist Arab governments in the region and no longer relies as heavily on the Israeli state to guard imperialist interests in the Middle East. While this does not automatically translate into a Palestinian victory, it does put the Israeli regime in a weaker position.

The opening to organize politically and struggle created by the accord is especially important in face of the sizable blows dealt to the Palestinian struggle over the past decade and a half. These include the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) being driven out of Lebanon in the early 1980s, the consolidation of a capitalist government in Iran following the 1979 revolution there, and the PLO's agreement to link the Iraqi government's reactionary invasion of Kuwait to the Palestinian struggle during the Gulf War. In the same period there have been blows to other revolutionary movements around the world, including the defeat of revolutions in Nicaragua and Grenada.

The Palestinian people need the space opened up by the agreement on self-rule to discuss and debate our politics, organize, and gain experience for the next stage of struggle — without the barrel of an Israeli gun at their head. The new layers of fighters who came forward during the *intifada* demonstrate the revolutionary potential of the Palestinian workers and youth. These forces deserve the support of working people the world over in fighting to use this victory to advance their struggle for self-determination.

## Parole for Mark Curtis now!

Trade unionists, political activists, and supporters of democratic rights in the United States and around the world have a stake in urging Iowa state officials to immediately parole Mark Curtis. A union and political activist and member of the Socialist Workers Party, Curtis has served five years in Iowa jails on trumped-up charges of rape and burglary.

When the police framed him in 1988, Curtis was involved in a struggle to defend the rights of immigrant workers. The night he was arrested the cops beat him and called him a "Mexican lover, just like you love those coloreds." In early 1992 Curtis won a lawsuit against the Des Moines police for the vicious beating he received.

Parole board officials have pressured Curtis to go through a Sex Offenders Treatment Program (SOTP) that requires prisoners to admit guilt. Curtis has steadfastly maintained his innocence of the charges and refuses to participate in the SOTP program. He carries out regular political discussion with his fellow inmates in prison, writes for the *Militant*, and is a leader of his own defense effort.

As of June 18 Curtis completed the required sentence on the third-degree sexual assault charge. The burglary charge, based solely on his presence at the house where the alleged assault occurred and tacked on by the cops several weeks after his initial arrest, is now the only basis for the authorities continuing to hold Curtis in jail.

The Mark Curtis Defense Committee has recently delivered more than 200 letters to the parole board from around the world demanding Curtis's release. Many also protest a new law restricting the right of prisoners to parole hearings. Curtis's supporters have extended their drive to collect letters to the board through the month of September.

Fighters everywhere, from the factory floors to the coalfields, to those involved in Cuba solidarity actions or defense of the abortion clinics should join in demanding that Curtis be granted a hearing and an immediate release. The political questions involved in the frame-up of Curtis and his fight for freedom — unity of native- and foreign-born workers; police frame-ups and brutality; growing attacks on constitutional legal guarantees and prisoners' rights — are just as important today as when he was arrested. Growing numbers of workers, young people, and political activists looking for ways to fight back against employer and government attacks readily see the relevance of Curtis's struggle and are open to joining the defense effort.

Letters urging his parole should be addressed to the Iowa State Board of Parole, Capital Annex, 523 East 12th St., Des Moines, IA 50319. Copies should be sent to the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, P. O. Box 1048, Des Moines, IA 50311.

## Demand aid to working farmers

While working farmers in the midwestern United States saw their fields destroyed in a torrent of floods this summer, farm families in much of the South saw crops shrivel on the vine as a drought hit. Thousands of farmers will be driven off the land as a result of these events.

But it is not primarily drought, flood, or pestilence, as bad as these are, that causes people to be tossed off their land. It is the banks, insurance companies, and the U.S. government.

Farmers are the victims of conditions over which they have no control. First and foremost *social* conditions wreck working farmers.

Working farmers are exploited by bankers, loan sharks, and grain traders, who give farmers a small percentage on the value they actually produce. Government relief for crop destruction is doled out with an eyeglass — and the lion's share goes to big capitalist farmers. Even when farmers have a bumper crop, the price they receive from the huge grain merchants falls, sometimes below the cost of production.

Washington bears responsibility for any farm auctions that will take place this year. Even a Federal Emergency Management Agency program that allowed farmers to file for unemployment compensation went largely unpublicized. While farmers in Minnesota were able to force

the unemployment office to extend a deadline to file for this benefit, many farm families are still left out in the cold.

Working farmers have their strongest ally in the working class. Workers too are faced with an offensive by the employers and government against wages, living conditions, and the democratic rights of all working people. Bill Clinton's health care plan, for instance, will force workers and farmers both to bear the brunt of rising health costs. Most workers will end up paying more, in some cases for receiving less. And working farmers will have to pay for the package themselves.

As the Democratic and Republican parties march hand in hand to more austerity packaged under the title of "deficit reduction," and to new wars to bolster capitalist profits abroad, a fighting alliance of workers and working farmers becomes even more urgent.

Striking coal miners who traveled to areas endangered by the flooding rivers to help sandbag and defend communities set an example for all workers to follow.

The labor movement should back working farmers' demands. These include an immediate moratorium on all farm foreclosures and large-scale relief for working farmers ravaged by flood and drought. The government should immediately make full unemployment benefits and health care available to working farm families.

## Jew-hatred in classroom is not 'freedom of speech'

BY SARA LOBMAN

Reader Gary Cohen, in a letter printed on the next page, raises several questions about an article that appeared in the June 7, 1993, issue of the *Militant* regarding City College of New York (CCNY) professor Leonard Jeffries.

Jeffries was removed from his post as chairman of the Black Studies Department at CCNY in March 1992 for being an incompetent administrator. The disciplinary action came after months of controversy surrounding anti-Semitic remarks he made during a speech the previous year. Jeffries portrayed Jews as the main progenitors of slavery and bias against Blacks.

In May, a federal jury concluded that the university had

## DISCUSSION WITH OUR READERS

violated Jeffries's First Amendment rights and ordered he be restored to his position and paid \$400,000 in damages.

Articles in the *Militant* indicated that disciplinary action against Jeffries was justified. "Because of the insidious character of anti-Semitism," the *Militant* said in December 1991, "those who promote it as professors or administrators in the educational system should be disciplined." Jeffries's attempts to turn his teaching of anti-Semitic doctrine to students into a "free speech" fight don't deserve the support of working people.

Cohen is correct in arguing the most important challenge for working people and students who are opposed to Jeffries's anti-Semitic and reactionary ideas must be to combat them politically. This is the only way to arm those who really want to fight against racism.

But it is also correct for workers and students to demand that professors who advocate Jew-hatred in the classroom be disciplined. Teachers, professors, and school administrators at public schools and universities who use their positions to preach racist or anti-Semitic poison to students are not practicing "freedom of speech."

This is a conquest that working people have won. It would be considered indefensible, for example, for a teacher in a public school to teach that Blacks are inferior to whites. Not many years ago, such "lessons" were common. Demanding that school administrations punish professors such as Jeffries who insist on using their classrooms to push these reactionary views is necessary to force the government to defend this gain.

Many students see Jeffries as an opponent of racism. He first came under attack by city officials and others as a member of a state-appointed committee to evaluate the current curriculum of the New York public schools. The committee charged that the curriculum was racist.

### Jews blamed for capitalist crisis

But Jeffries does not just argue for the inclusion of the contributions of Blacks and others in school curricula, a conquest that should be defended. Anti-Semitism and other reactionary ideas are a central part of what he teaches — both in class and during public presentations.

"This is the institutionalism of racism that the *Jewish community is largely responsible for*," James Traub reports Jeffries told a class on "World Civilization." [Emphasis in the original] Jeffries was referring to the racist stereotyping of Blacks in many Hollywood movies. "I've talked about the Jews, so the whole power structure, the whole Jewish-controlled media, has set out to destroy me," he added.

This is false. Jews are not responsible for the racist oppression of Blacks — capitalism is. Nor were Jews responsible for the slave trade. In fact, in an article that appeared in the July 20, 1992, *New York Times*, Henry Lewis explains that Jewish merchants accounted for less than two percent of the slave trade.

Anti-Semitism is a form of scapegoating. Rightist forces have historically whipped up Jew-hatred in periods of economic and social crisis. This makes it harder for working people to see the real source of the crisis — capitalism itself — and helps divide the working class and pave the way for fascism.

Anti-Semitism can gain such a powerful foothold among the petty bourgeoisie, and even among layers of the working class, because of the role Jews played historically — initially as a result of the geographic location of Palestine — as merchants, traders, and money lenders in the ancient and feudal world.

The class composition of Jews in the United States today is also predominantly petty bourgeoisie.

*The Jewish Question: A Marxist Interpretation*, written by Abram Leon during the rise of fascism in Europe in the 1930s and 40s, explains the historical role of the Jewish people — or people-class, as he calls them — and of anti-Semitism. Young people interested in offering a scientific response to Jeffries's theories will find this book useful.

### Sun people and ice people

Jeffries also teaches that people of European descent are "egotistic, individualistic, and exploitative," while those of African descent are "humanistic." He calls Europeans "ice people" and Africans "sun people." He has distributed booklets claiming the skin pigment melanin gives Blacks intel-

Continued on Page 11

# Books offer glimpse at Black Panthers' history

**A Taste of Power: A Black Woman's Story** by Elaine Brown. 452 pp. New York: Pantheon Books, 1992. \$22.95

**This Side of Glory: The Autobiography of David Hilliard and the Story of the Black Panther Party** by David Hilliard and Lewis Cole. 450 pp. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1993. \$24.95.

## BY IKE NAHEM

Two recently published books highlight some of the history of the Black Panther Party. *A Taste of Power: A Black Woman's Story* by Elaine Brown is well-written, quite interesting, and often very engaging. Brown doesn't make any claim to be revolutionary or communist in her political outlook or activities today. As a result the book doesn't attempt to draw out the important lessons that revolutionaries can learn today from the experience of the Black Panther Party in the 1960s and early '70s.

In *This Side of Glory*, David Hilliard gives his version of events motivated by the 1989 murder of his lifelong friend, Panther founder Huey Newton. Newton, who had become addicted to cocaine and its "crack" derivative, was



1970 rally against victimization of Black Panther activists in New York

found dead in an Oakland, California, alley in 1989. Hilliard, at one time the Panthers' chief of staff, details his own degrading crack addiction in the 1980s. He is now an official with the Service Employees International Union.

The assassination of Malcolm X in February 1965 meant that the militant Black upsurge that drove through the codification of legal equality, voting rights, and affirmative action took place without the benefit of his revolutionary political leadership.

The largest and most prominent independent Black political organization that did emerge out of that period was the Black Panther Party. From its beginnings in Oakland in 1966, the Black Panthers grew rapidly into a national organization. Thousands of revolutionary-minded and mostly working-class Black youth joined it. At its apex the Panthers claimed more than 30 chapters in states across the country and a weekly newspaper, *The Black Panther*, with a circulation of more than 100,000.

Initially the Panthers projected independent political action around a radical "10-point program" for full employment, housing, education, exemption of Blacks from the U.S. military, and the promotion of armed self-defense against racist police abuse.

The Black Panthers were quickly targeted for destruction by the federal government under the infamous Cointelpro (Counterintelligence program) — with the FBI

directing the activities of state and local police agencies. Nineteen Panthers were killed as a result of covert actions and assaults, including Bobby Hutton, John Huggins, Bunchy Carter, George Jackson, Fred Hampton, and Mark Clark. Scores were imprisoned on frame-ups and set-ups from coast to coast.

Before collapsing and dissolving in the mid-1970s, the organization had become thoroughly demoralized and corrupted, absorbed in Democratic Party municipal politics in Oakland, and petty gangsterism.

A central theme of Brown's book is the position and struggles of Black women in U.S. society and in the Black Panther Party. She details how violence against women by male party members was tolerated by the leadership.

These administrative methods detailed by Brown extended to the use of violence against members as a form of punishment for alleged infractions. These were usually issued at the whim of a leader, lashing with a whip being the favored method. Brown describes her own whipping.

*A Taste of Power* also details the Panthers' stockpiling of weapons, and the training of members in the use and maintenance of firearms. The political content of the Panthers' militarism — the top title in the party was "minister of defense," held by Huey Newton — was abstention from real politics and actual struggles in the Black community, and in the mass movement against the Vietnam War.

The Panthers did not launch any independent election campaigns. Instead they formed an electoral alliance with the left-wing, middle-class Peace and Freedom Party; increased their collaboration with the Stalinist U.S. Communist Party; and supported Democratic Party politicians such as Ron Dellums.

Using informants, agent provocateurs, poison-pen letters, agent baiting, race-baiting, jail, and assassinations, the FBI succeeded in devastating the Black Panther Party.

In Chicago the police, under the direction of state's attorney Edward Hanrahan, organized the assassination of the dynamic Panther leader, 21-year-old Fred Hampton, a former youth director of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). The Chicago Panthers' security captain was a paid FBI informant — given \$30,000 over three years — who provided the FBI and Chicago cops with a map of Hampton's apartment, where the Panther leader was gunned down while sleeping.

Brown recounts the vicious FBI campaign of fabricated leaks against actress Jean Seberg, who supported the Panthers. The FBI's Los Angeles office asked and quickly got FBI director J. Edgar Hoover's permission to proceed with "advising Hollywood gossip columnists" of the false assertion that Seberg had become pregnant by a Black Panther leader. Movie roles for Seberg quickly dried up and she eventually committed suicide.

The racist, illegal government assault was greatly abetted by the political evolution of the Black Panthers towards ultraleftism, and Stalinist politics and organizational methods. This invariably left the Panthers vulnerable to manipulation by secret police agencies.

## LETTERS

### Multiculturalism

The lively exchange concerning the so-called multicultural curriculum for New York City schools has been interesting and informative. Recently, I helped plan a Malcolm X birthday celebration sponsored by an adult literacy program at the Berkeley Public Library. Searching the adult literacy collection, I did locate a copy of *Malcolm X for Beginners*.

In examining the book, I found the following account of Malcolm's views on women by the book's author, Bernard Aquina Doctor.

"Malcolm modified his views about a woman's place in the struggle since leaving the Black Muslims [sic]. He felt that Black women had a very important role in keeping the Black family together. He fought hard to keep the Black community together and frowned on groups that tried to recruit Black women away from this primary responsibility, such as the Feminist Liberation Organization and NOW."

Wondering whether NOW (which I assume stands for the National Organization for Women) actually existed during Malcolm X's lifetime, and whether the Feminist Liberation Organization ever existed at all, I consulted the Encyclopedia of Associations which says that NOW was founded in 1966, a year AFTER the assassination of Malcolm X. I could find no listing for the Feminist Liberation Organization.

Bringing my personal copy of *Malcolm X: Final Speeches, February 1965* (published by Pathfinder Press), to the birthday celebration program, I read both Mr. Aquina Doctor's account of Malcolm X's views on women AND Malcolm X's own words on the subject from *Final Speeches*:

"In every Middle East or African country I have visited, I noticed the country is as 'advanced' as its women are, or as backward as its women. By this I mean, in areas where the women have been pushed into the background and kept without education, the whole area or country is just as backward, uneducated and 'underdeveloped.' Where the women are encouraged to get education and play a more active role in the all-around affairs of the community and the country, the entire people are more active, more enlightened, and more progressive."

Following my presentation, one irate member of the predominantly Black, all-female audience raised her hand and proposed that the library literacy program purchase 15 copies of *Final Speeches* to be given as graduation presents to each literacy student. Her proposal met with acclamation from the others in the audience.

My experience in looking over books promoted as "multicultural" is that, all too often, ideas are advanced under the rubric of "multiculturalism" that run counter to the class interests of the majority of us who are subjected to, in a variety of ways and degrees, the oppression and superexploitation meted out by the capitalist system. As the red, black and green comic-book "documentary" about Malcolm X illustrates, "All that glitters is not gold."

Toba Singer  
San Francisco, California

### Small businesses

The September 6 *Militant* carried an excellent article on the Clinton health plan. It explained how this will gut many health-care benefits that now exist and will not resolve the medical care crisis.

One point I'd like to single out. Several times the article cites the danger that the plan will cripple many small businesses.

Many times civil rights legislation, union rights, job safety and health protection, minimum wage increases and other gains for working people are opposed under the guise of saving small businesses from collapse. Most often, this is a smokescreen for the opposition of the largest businesses to the issue.

From the point of view of working people, it makes no difference whether the boss employs 15 or 15,000. They are both exploiters. No favors in union contracts or social rights should be given the small employer. we have no interest in protecting certain bosses.

In fact, it is not taxation, or wages, or regulation that drives the small-scale boss under. Rather, it is the fact that the bigger employer can utilize (that is, exploit) labor in a more efficient manner. This would make itself felt at the marketplace regardless of the issue being complained about.

The Clinton health-care plan is an attack on the real medical needs of the vast majority of workers and farmers. But the objections of small-scale bosses, just or otherwise, should not affect our view.

Marty Boyers  
Greensboro, North Carolina

### Leonard Jeffries

I was puzzled by the article regarding the attempt by CUNY [City University of New York] officials to remove Prof. Leonard Jeffries from his post as chairman of the Black Studies Dept. at CCNY|City College of New York|. It implies that freedom of



speech is not an issue in this case since the action was "mild" and "did not even affect his right or ability to promote his ideas." If the officials had focused on anti-Semitism, which they avoided, rather than his academic competence, then the course of action against Jeffries was justified.

The article states that "it is unacceptable for professors and administrators in the educational system to promote racist or anti-Semitic ideas." Can university officials be relied upon to make this determination?

I could imagine a scenario where a college officialdom would make a case for disallowing the writings of Malcolm X to be used in a class curriculum because of his alleged "racist" views towards whites. Or anti-Zionist writings being construed as anti-Semitic.

The article indicates that Jeffries's views were expressed in public and not in the classroom. Regardless of

where these views were expressed, they must be exposed for what they are, reactionary and divisive for working people. The article appropriately addresses the anti-Semitism and Black superiority views espoused by Jeffries. However it would seem more appropriate to urge working people and students to protest and confront the views of Jeffries and his ilk rather than supporting administrative action by college officials which can be a danger for freedom of expression for those advocating revolutionary change.

Gary Cohen  
Arlington, Massachusetts

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of general interest to our readers. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

## Australia Aborigines fight attempts by government to curtail land rights

BY LINDA HARRIS  
AND PAUL GREY

SYDNEY. Australia — A deepgoing debate triggered by a year-old court decision on Aboriginal land rights continues to unfold here. On June 3, 1992, the Australian High Court recognized the traditional land rights of the Meriam people to the Island of Mer in the Torres Strait, between the northern tip of Australia and Papua, New Guinea.

The ruling was the result of a 10-year legal and political fight led by Eddie Mabo against the Queensland state government. Mabo, who died five months before the ruling was released, filed the claim after the state government denied him the right to return to the island in 1972. "In those days, we had to get permission to go across to Mer," explained Bonita Mabo, Eddie Mabo's wife.

The chairman of the Murray Island Council, James Salee, welcomed the decision. "People are very happy around here," he said. "This recognizes our traditional ownership and that we are not part of Queensland after all."

The High Court, however, also ruled that Native title is extinguished where the land has been taken over by mining or other corporations and that titles are to be subject to state and federal legislation. The law also limits claims to areas where Native people can prove continuous occupation since 1788.

### Opposition to ruling

There has been an outpouring of racist comments by right-wing politicians. Marshall Perron, for example, chief minister of the Northern Territory, speaking to the Foreign Correspondents' Association, said that Aborigines "really are centuries behind us in their cultural attitudes and their aspirations."

Tim Fischer, leader of the federal National Party, launched an attack on Aborigines at a party state conference in mid-June. "Some representatives of the Aboriginal community are exhibiting 'Mabo greed,'" he said. "Instances of this are the ridiculous and irresponsible land claims which are springing up across Australia."

The big mining and finance companies have been warning of the dangers resulting from the "uncertainty" around the Mabo decision. They warn that finance companies will withdraw investments and cancel mining projects. The Mabo agreement "guarantees economic stagnation," said Hugh Morgan, managing director of Western Mining Corp.

"What is driving Australia's mining companies in their campaign of threats is exactly the same pressure that drives them to lecture the UMW about 'unreasonable wage claims' — the lust for profit," responded John Maitland, United Mine Workers (UMW) general president, in an article in *Common Cause*, the union's publication.

The Wik people of Northern Queensland, for example, are claiming Native title to the western side of Cape York peninsula. Part of this area is on a lease held by Comalco (a subsidiary of CRA, one of the major mining companies in Australia) for bauxite mining. Comalco holds 15 percent of the world's bauxite resources. The Gladstone aluminum plant, fed from bauxite mined here, is the largest in the world. Recently, representatives of the Wik people went to Canberra, the capital, to push their claim.

### 'Terra nullius'

The most important aspect of the Mabo decision is the decisive rejection of the concept of "terra nullius." This is the legal fiction that when European settlers first arrived in Aus-



Land rights debate in Australia is fueled by economic depression. Above: 30,000 protest in Sydney in January 1988 against racism and for Aboriginal rights.

tralia, the land was unoccupied and that the Aboriginal people who had lived there for more than 40,000 years were not in possession. This meant that in the eyes of the law there was no basis to provide compensation to Native people originally living on the land.

The debate on Mabo is taking place in the context of a worldwide depression, as Aus-

tralia's rulers are facing the deepest economic and social crisis since the 1930s. The Labor government has not been able to put forward any solutions to this crisis and the tactical divisions in the ruling class are sharpening as a result.

Unemployment for Aborigines is five times that of other Australians. Their aver-

age income is half that of non-Aborigines. They suffer the most from cutbacks in education and health care. Aborigines have a life expectancy 17 years lower than other Australians. Infant mortality rates are twice as high for Aboriginal children.

Native people are especially targeted by the cops and the courts. Aborigines make up 15 percent of the prison population, well above their proportion in the population of 1.4 percent.

### Native title must not be annulled

A landmark conference of more than 400 representatives of Aboriginal peoples took place August 3–5 to discuss the Labor government's response to the Mabo decision. Held at the Eva Valley cattle station in the Northern Territory, it was the largest and most representative meeting on land rights held by Aborigines in decades. It was also the first conference of its type not funded by the government.

Aboriginal leaders at the meeting rejected the federal government's proposed legislation to vest the final decision on economic development with special tribunals and state governments. They demanded that Native title not be annulled by grants to mining companies and other "developers." As Mick Dodson, Aboriginal social justice commissioner, stated, "Whatever happens on our land must be a matter for us and us alone. We want economic development, but we want it on our terms and conditions."

## British rulers push 'family values' as part of drive to slash social benefits

BY CELIA PUGH

LONDON — As part of their drive to slash welfare and unemployment payments and roll back workers' rights, the rulers in Britain have launched a campaign to glorify "family values."

"The natural state should be the two-adult family caring for their children," Conservative government Welsh secretary John Redwood said in a July 2 speech. He called for cutting supplementary pension benefits to encourage this outcome.

Government junior health minister Tom Sackville argues that "the existence of very comprehensive benefits and a free housing system has further reinforced the illusion that anyone can have a baby at any time regardless of their means or circumstances." At last year's Conservative Party conference, Social Security Secretary Peter Lilley accused young women of getting pregnant in order to obtain public housing, and blamed absent fathers for their children's poverty.

The *Observer* newspaper reported July 11 that one in five families are headed by a single parent. Nine out of ten of these families are headed by a woman and the majority — 950,000 — depend on government income support.

The *Sunday Times*, in a July 11 special report titled "Wedded to Welfare," scapegoated single parents and absent fathers and blamed crime on "the breakdown of traditional family life." Redwood and Lilley should be applauded, it said, for asking "questions about a society that no longer imposed sanctions on those whose behaviour threatens it with anarchy by spawning an underclass that is increasingly out of control."

According to the *Observer*, several government ministers are discussing proposals that would include housing single mothers and their children in hostels in order to save social security payments; paying single mothers benefits only if the father has been

tracked down and proven he cannot pay child support; and paying young single mothers only if they stay in their parents' house or move to a special hostel.

### Attacks on welfare

Since April 5, 1993, single mothers have had their welfare benefit payments reduced if they refuse to name or reveal the whereabouts of their children's father. Mothers are only exempt from this penalty if they can prove they or their children will suffer "harm or distress" if the father is tracked down. A special child support agency has been set up to locate fathers in order to obtain maintenance payments at levels far higher than rates presently set in the courts. This money can be automatically deducted from a man's paycheck. It is also then deducted from the mother's welfare payments.

These moves are part of a broader offensive against welfare and other benefits. Ministerial proposals are currently under consideration that would cut government benefits for the sick, disabled, and pensioners. One proposed measure would extend the present retirement age for women from 60 to 65. The *Guardian* estimates this would amount to a cut of £4 billion (one pound is equivalent to US\$1.50) over 10 years.

To facilitate these attacks, the rulers are trying to foster divisions among working people. They play off women against men, native born against immigrant workers, and Black against white. An article in the *Sunday Times* special report, for example, entitled "Estate betrayed by its fathers" quotes a young single mother living in a rent-free council house on £80 a week. "It's hard," she says, "But I can manage by myself." The author of this article responds, "Of course she does not manage by herself, but exists only because other families, who have chosen to stay together and work, pay taxes and enable her to collect benefits."

Some of these anti-working-class proposals have drawn criticism from leaders of the opposition Labour Party and welfare rights groups. However, rather than challenge the call to defend family values, they have joined the plea for increased personal responsibility. David Blunkett, Labour Party shadow health secretary, argues for "the acceptance by fathers of their obligations towards their children and positive housing policies which do not encourage the belief that the only way to a home is having a baby."

Sue Slipman of the National Council of One Parent Families, while attacking the policy moves against single parents, was congratulated by the *Sunday Times* for saying that she "had no truck with people who abandon their children" and for emphasizing that "modern morality must be based on parental responsibility."

Quoting figures compiled by the Department of Social Security, the *Guardian* reports that the poorest families in Britain suffered a cut of 14 percent in their income since the election of the 1979 Tory government. Most single parents and their children live below the official poverty line, the *Observer* reported.

The myth of the work-shy single parent scrounging off the state is also refuted by the *Observer* report. It cites a 1991 Department of Social Security study, which revealed that 90 percent of single parents wanted to work in the future and 55 percent would work immediately if they had child-care support. The government, however, provides nursery education for only 35–40 percent of children under five years old, according to a report in the Nov. 2, 1991, issue of the *Economist*. Child-care costs begin at £50 a week. "Since over half the women in the country working full time take home £165 a week or less after taxes," the *Economist* states, "being a working mother is not for most a very rewarding business."